伊藤悠
シュトルム
10
BIG SPIRITS COMICS SPECIAL

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潜水

10

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Itoh Yu

BIG SPIRITS COMICS SPECIAL

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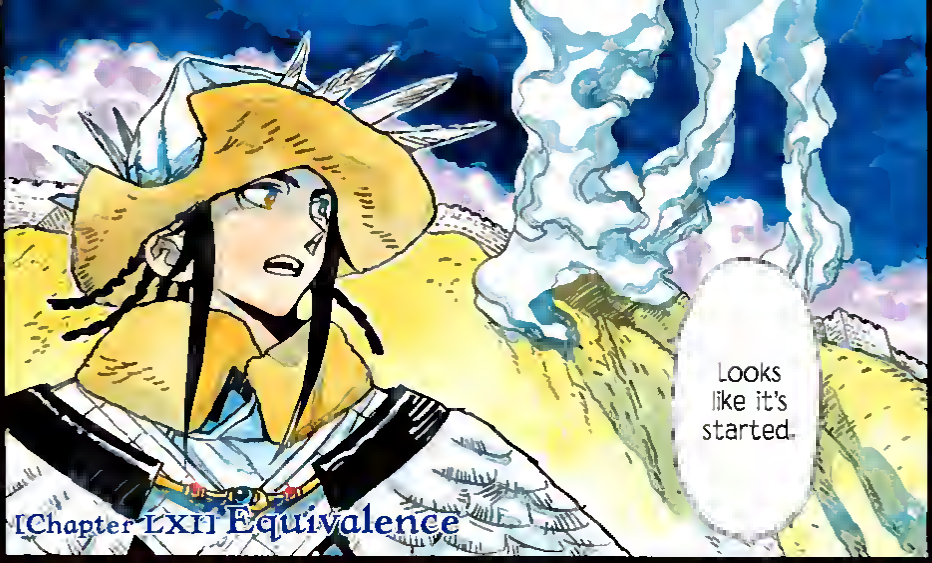
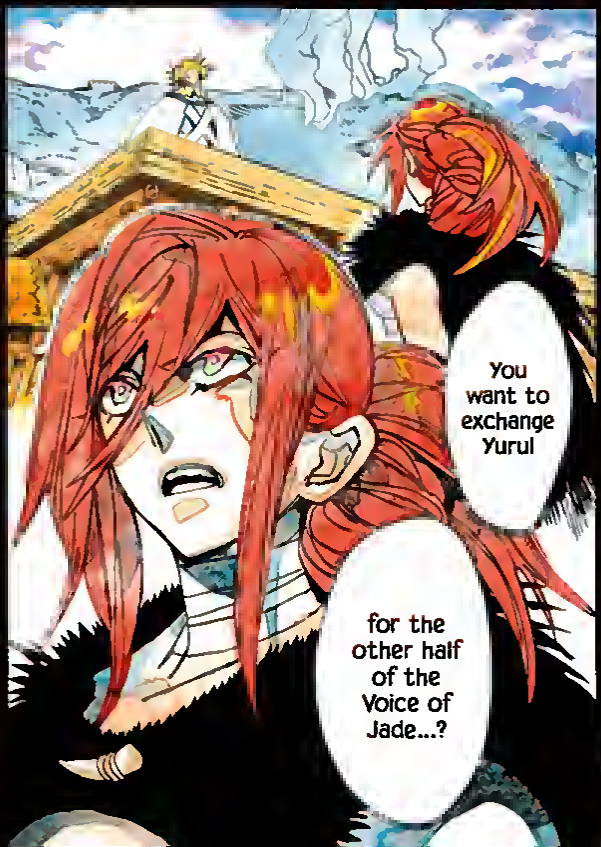
*THE COVER FLAP READS "WOLF KING" IN TANGUT SCRIPT



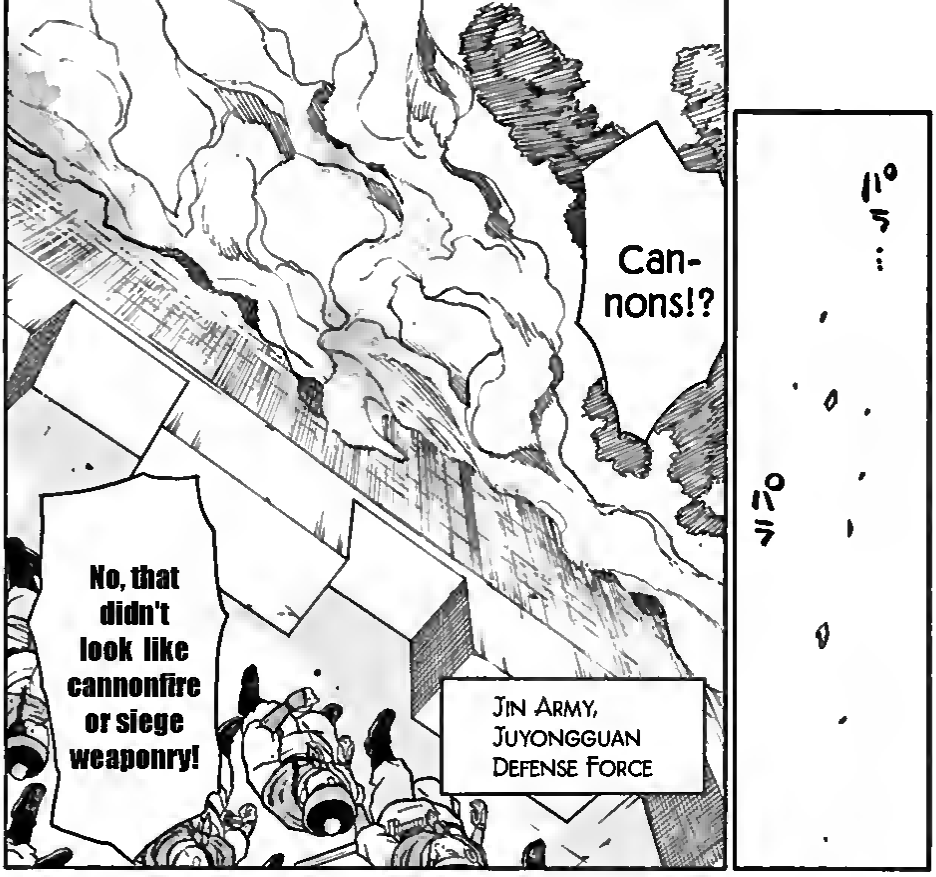
Chapter LXII Equivalence



[Chapter LXII] Equivalence

It seems he envisions a world that has no heroes and needs no king.
"Writing" will make people equal. Through it, experience and technology will be shared...
Yurui gets more fascinating the more I talk to him.
...Like father.
Flawed, irreplaceable people will disappear.
say the same things.
...I doubt you and Yurui

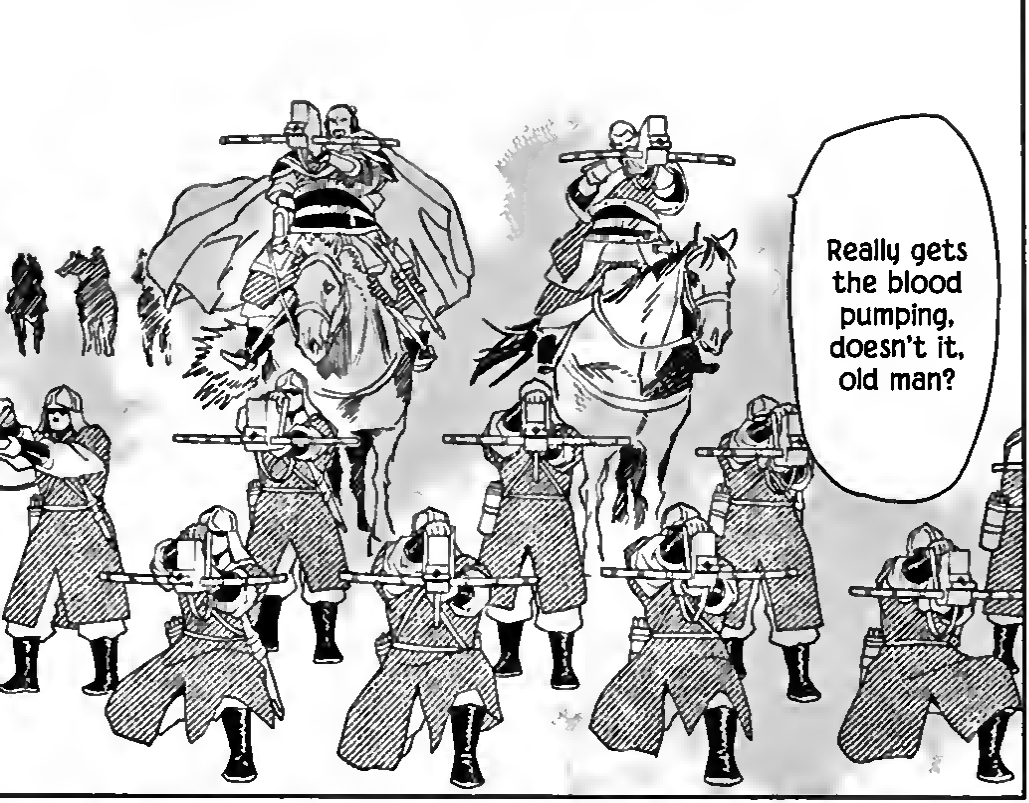
...And if I don't hand over the Voice of Jade,
We can carry out that duty without you.
If you love my little brother, I'll give him to you.
Yurul's health will take a turn for the worse. Am I right?
You should entrust protecting and passing down the Voice of Jade to the new Mongols.
But I'll take his ideas.
I am Nalan. Take your time thinking it over.
I suppose so. Three days; that's how long I'll give you to deliver it.


Can-nons!?
No, that didn't look like cannonfire or siege weaponry!
Jin Army, Juyongguan Defense Force

6

It hit and ex-ploded.
Look, it can't do a thing to the walls of Juyongguan.
A new Mongol weapon then... But don't panic.

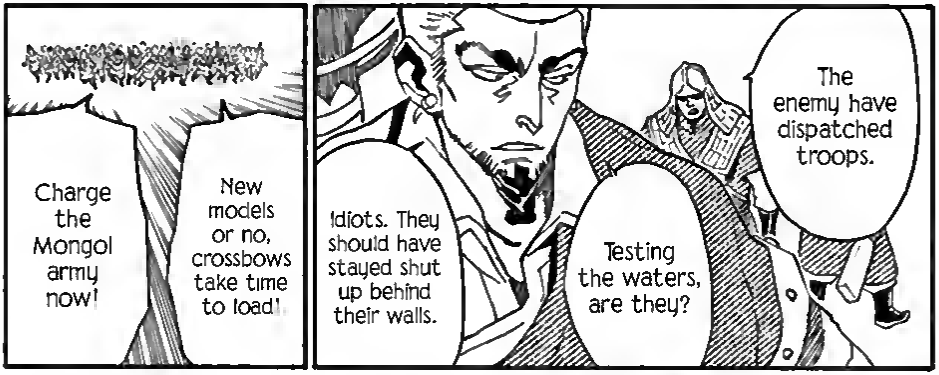
10


Really gets the blood pumping, doesn't it, old man?

I'd like to present it to them sooner than later.
If we can take Juyongguan, Zhongdu, the Jin capital, will fall into the hands of the Great Khan and Lord Tolui.

Like it or not, their attention is focused on us.

One day, this black powder will dominate war.
Seven tenths saltpeter with charcoal and sulfur...


Charge the Mongol army now!
New models or no, crossbows take time to load!
Idiots. They should have stayed shut up behind their walls.
Testing the waters, are they?
The enemy have dispatched troops.

Ready.
Even from up on a wall, they should be able to tell at a glance that times have changed.

Fire.

Once more of these are produced,
a nameless soldier will be able to kill even "Shut Hell" or "The Tiger."
They can be fired six times without reloading.
A single soldier can carry one, and they fly faster and farther than javelins...
They hit and explode.

Let's try a third volley.

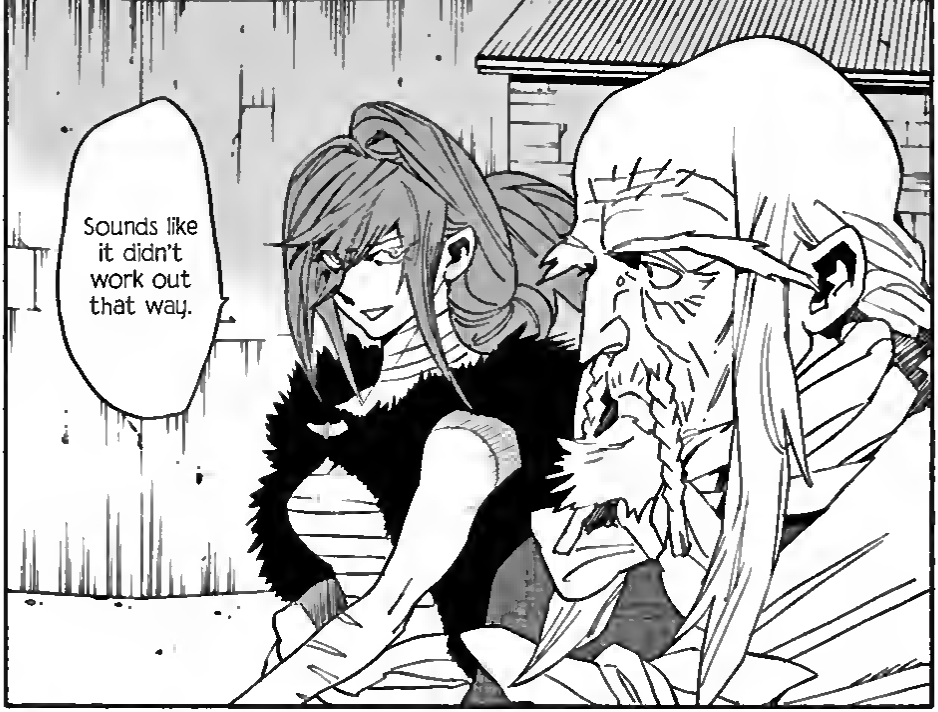
Intruder in the camp!
That black horse! Could it be—!?
14
15
No need for an escape route.
The Mongol army at Juyongguan is several thousand men and and horses strong. They must have equipment and provisions in their camp for at least one month's siege.
I'll attack those, aiming to cause panic, and break through to their headquarters.

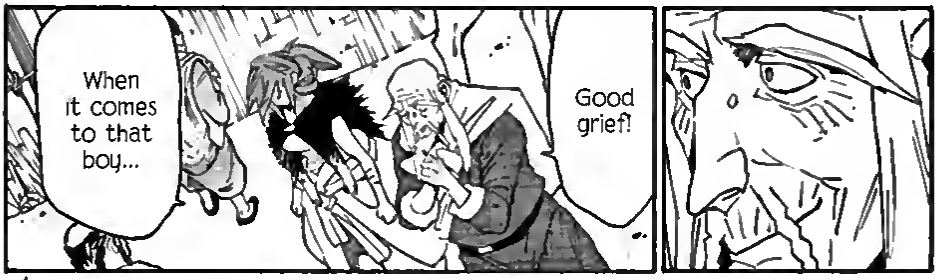
キリ
ドドド
That smoke.

War with firearms.
Soon, every soldier will be equally capable of inflicting massive casualties.
So, the Mongols have gotten their hands on firearms. It doesn't look like they have many yet, but...
even if their aim is off, they seem to blast flesh and bone.
18
Firearms demand less individual experience and skill than swords or bows.
All that's needed is for their handling to be widely known.

and writing will make that happen.
Is this another part of the equality you wish for,
Yurul?

I, Boldu, have spent decades defending the Voice of Jade.
Only to preserve the Tangut script, I have become a servant and an assassin,
heedless of the lives lost for the sake of these tablets,
not caring even should I be amongst them.
A young ship, able to carry the Voice of Jade farther and longer than my old bones could;
That's all Master Yurul should have been in my eyes.


Sounds like it didn't work out that way.


When it comes to that boy...
Good grief!

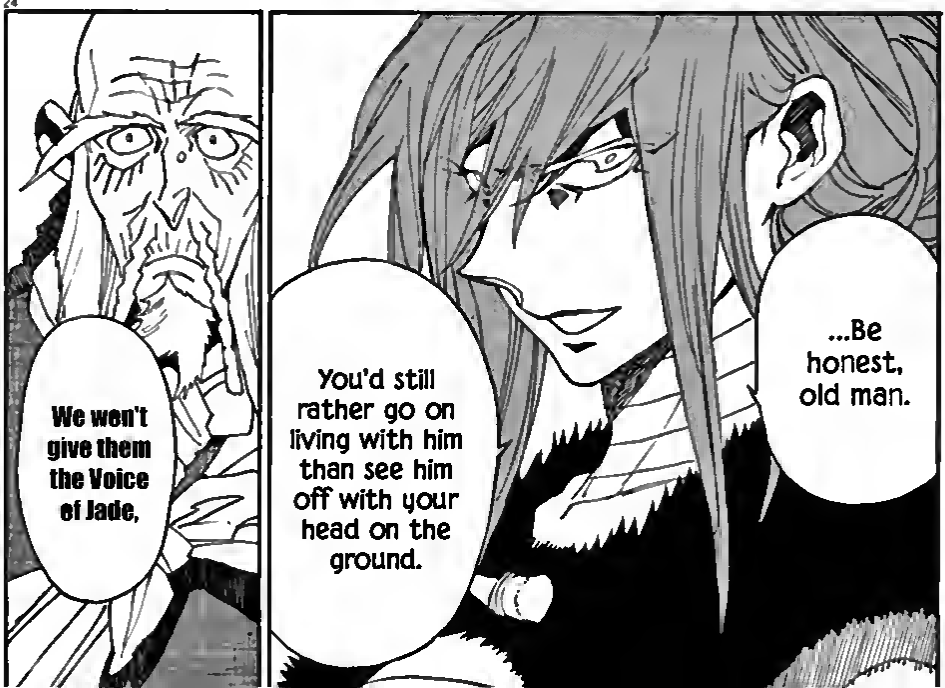
How he's grown...
screaming, fighting ...
stopping and grieving for every single one.
Never growing used to death, always shocked and dismayed,

The Great Xia* – The country of the Tangut – is already as good as murdered.
If the Voice of Jade is smashed, it will end without a trace.
...I guess the Voice of Jade is like a tombstone, then.
For generations, and for millions.
Even so...
It is not worth Master Yurul's life.
That boy is the living future. I can see it with these eyes.

※ GREAT XIA: A NAME FOR WESTERN XIA USED BY ITS INHABITANTS.

Even should my head part from my body, as long as you are here, Master Yurul will be able to escape and flee somewhere.
I will go and deliver this to Nalan.
I'll have to apologize to Gulshan – and to Lady Ifa – in the next world.
If we handed over the voice of Jade, we'd be betraying Yurul.

I'm sure Yurul hasn't given up, even now.
If you die, Boldu, and the Tangut script is destroyed, even if his life is spared, it will leave a hole in his heart.
Though born a Mongol, Yurul's heart was drawn to Tangut writing, and he risked his life to bear the Voice of Jade.


We won't give them the Voice of Jade.
You'd still rather go on living with him than see him off with your head on the ground.
...Be honest, old man.

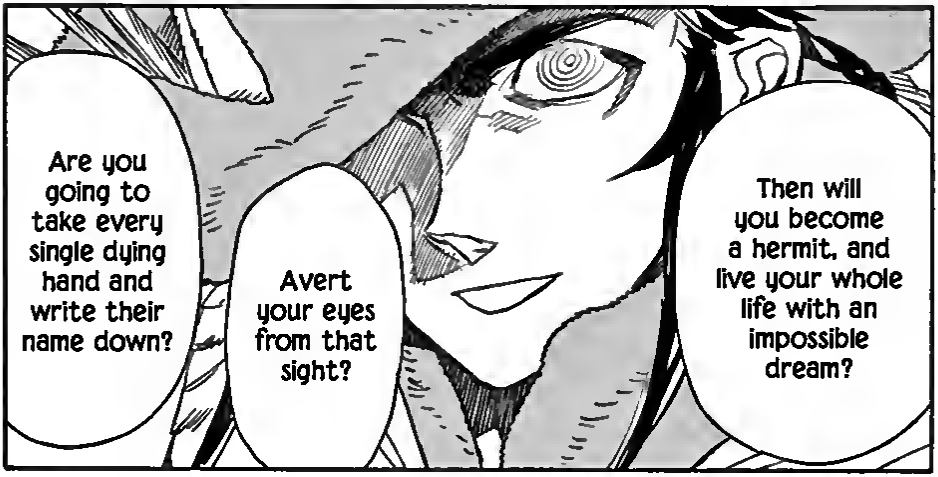
and we'll take Yurul back.

I bet you wanted to save them.
Guess there really are no gods or buddhas.
I've lived on the road as the Khan's falcon,
but I've never seen a battle as big as this.
26
It was the Mongols who started the fighting.
...It's kind of a disconcert-ing sight...
27

You can't just take the perspective of the week.
The same as you and me, Nalan.
Before they were lying over there, every single one of them was breathing and talking.
They're not just scenery.
Do you think I have that dream because I think it will come true before my eyes?
your dream of people saving each other with writing can't be realized from the losers' side. Not in a thousand years.
No matter how you struggle,

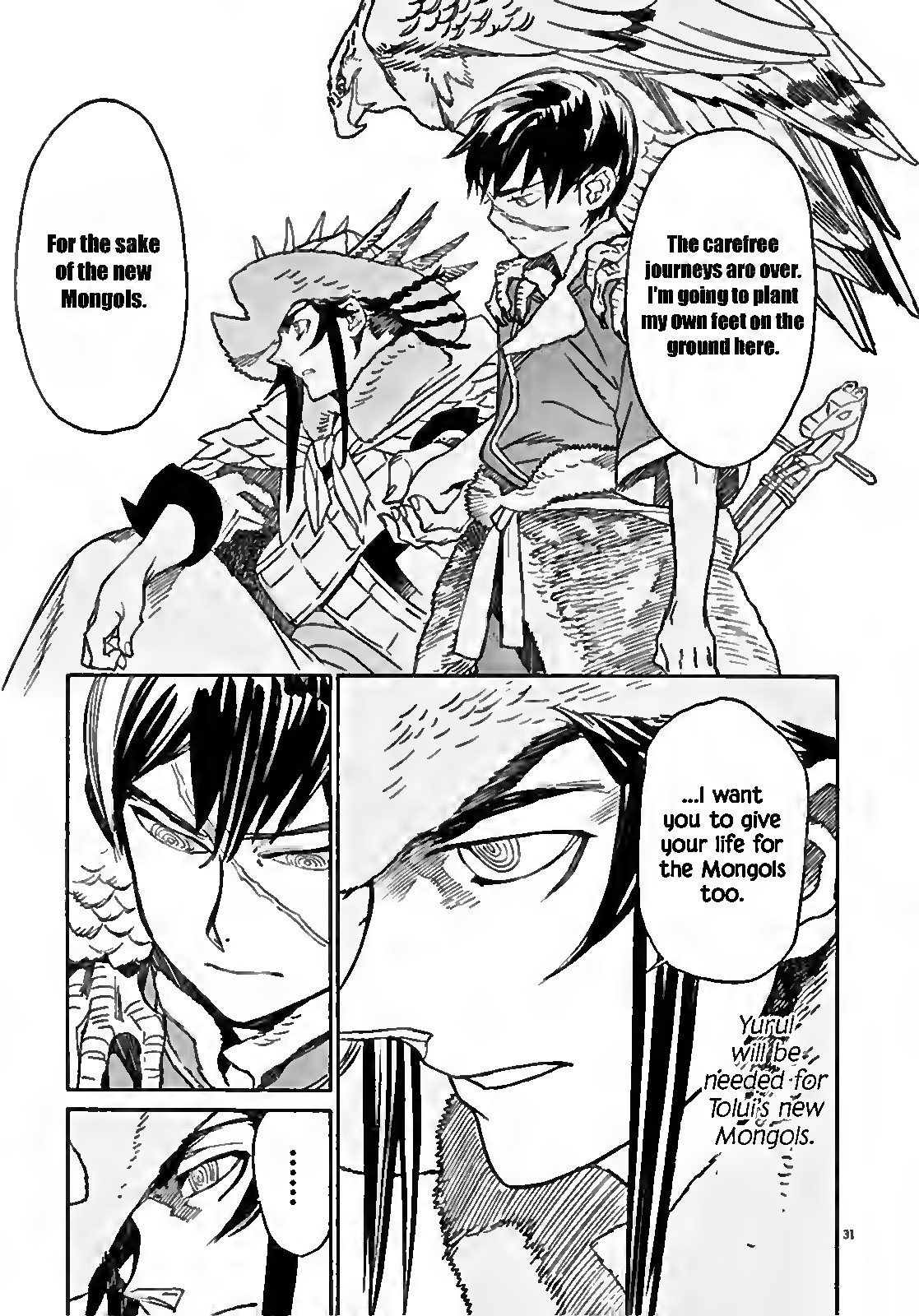
"I will see to the ends of the earth, and make them mine. Do you think that dream will come true?"
"If not, do you think I'm going to stop?"
Both arrogant. They must be mad.
The Great Khan tries to drink space and distance dry,
and Yurul wants to transcend time!
...If you can make it happen, that's fine.
The duty of the new Mongols is to build and supervise a system that won't create upheaval.
At those times, the strong have a responsibility to seize control.
Given the chance, the world falls into disorder.

I won't be one of you.
You are a Mongol. You have the duties of the strong.
Buried among the Tsog or no, you are the Great Khan's son.


Are you going to take every single dying hand and write their name down?
Avert your eyes from that sight?
Then will you become a hermit, and live your whole life with an impossible dream?

As long as they bring ease and comfort, your letters will spread. You won't even have to wait a thousand years.
In the world the new Mongols will rule, poverty will be a thing of the past.

Does "that sight" really anger you...?
Nalan...


For the sake of the new Mongols.
The carefree journeys are over. I'm going to plant my own feet on the ground here.
...I want you to give your life for the Mongols too.
Yurui will be needed for Tolui's new Mongols.
.....

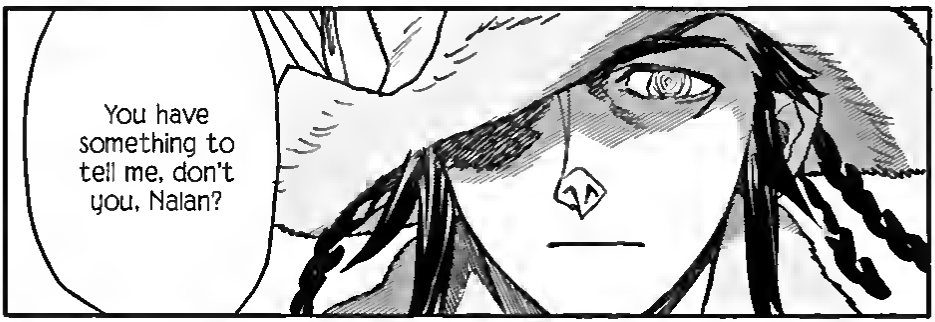
...This talk
isn't over, is it?
And...
Yurul.
to sweep the old Mongols away...

Shut Hell?
Do you want to see her?
the Voice of Jade will be needed as well.

[Chapter LXIII] The Fool

The Jin Army is holed up tight in Juyongguan, and we're not sure how to press the attack.
If this stalemate might last a while...
We've stolen provisions from Jin villages...
but our store of food for men and horses continues to decrease
ふふっ

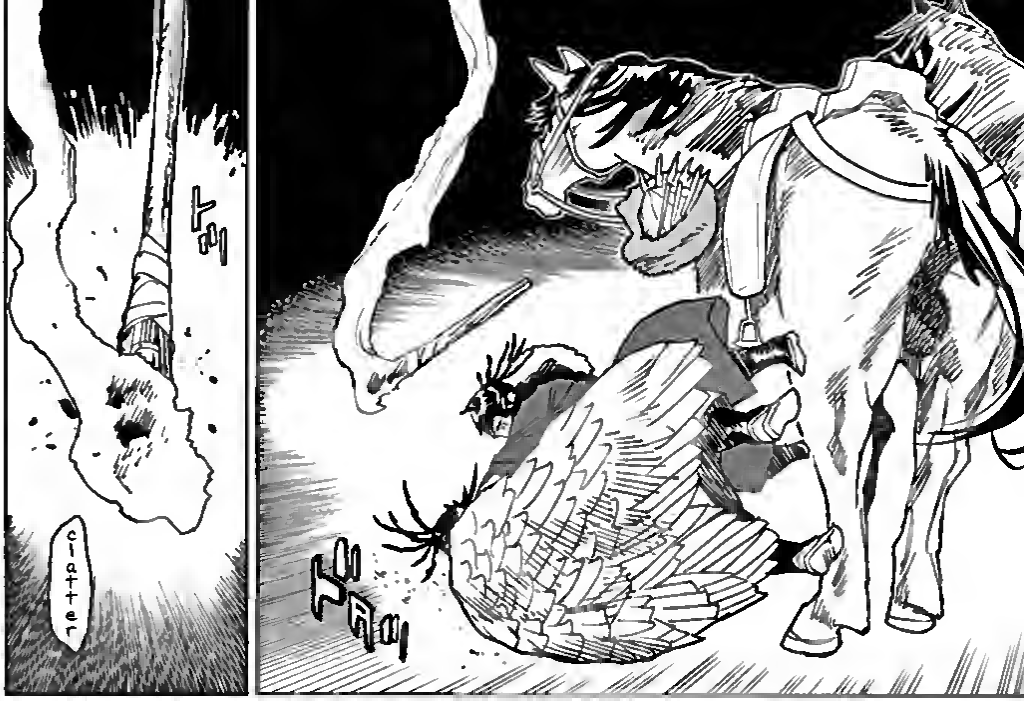
Tolui, what are you doing alone in a place like this.
Waiting for you.


You have something to tell me, don't you, Nalan?

Tolui, all I am is yours.
Past and future.

I want you to believe that everything I'm about to say is for your sake, and the sake of the Mongols you'll rule one day.
Tell me, Nalan.
I've never doubted that.
There's a reason father is trying to burn away the Tangut script.
Have you ever seen father's back, Tolui?
He never shows it, even at watering places in mid-summer, does he?

...A wound?
That's because there's a wound there that could cause the Mongols' downfall.
"Slave of Western Xia."
There are Tangut letters burned into father's back.


clatter

If by any chance the world learns of that,
it would put a crack in the khan's dignity, and shake all the Mongols
Don't lie!

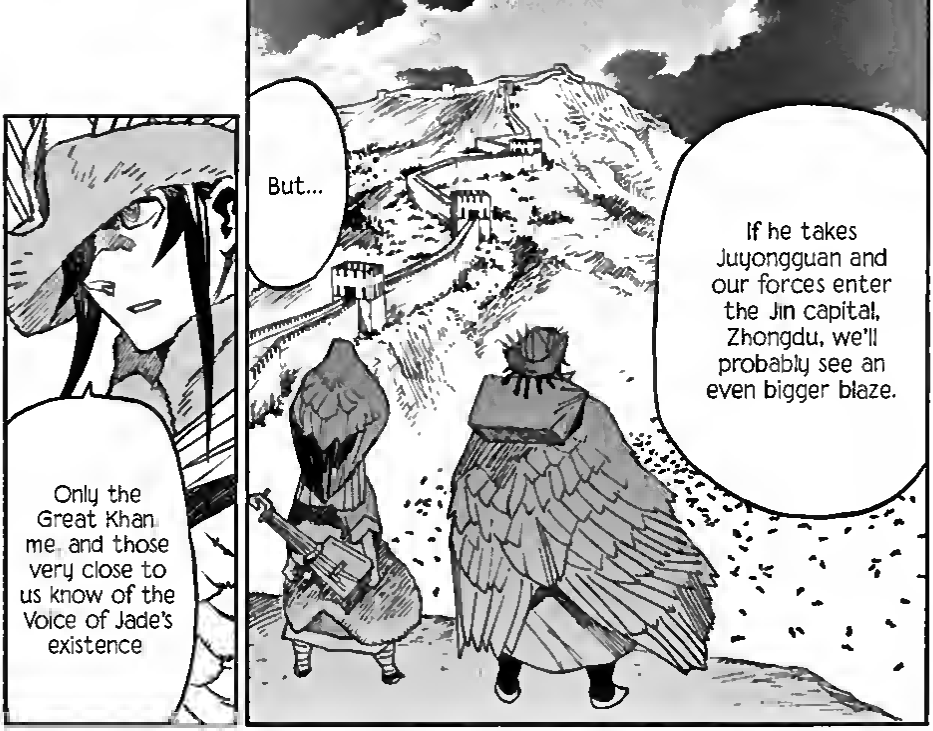
Whoever I try to fool, I will never lie to you.
You won't... tell me it's not true, will you, Nalan?
.....

Tolui.
You have to become the next Khan as soon as possible, before something happens to father.
...Stand up.
I'm telling you to stand up.
...Nalan, you–
I won't make you get your hands dirty.
The Mongols will be renewed by your innocence.

I can't hear anything...
Melumi, are you singing...?

Has Nalan...
left Melumi alone again?

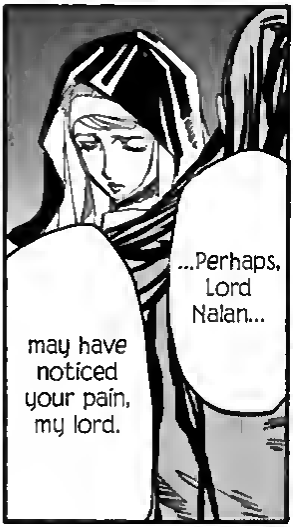
The Great Khan, our father, invaded Western Xia and is now trying to consume Jin as well,
because he's searching for the Voice of Jade you're carrying, Yurul.

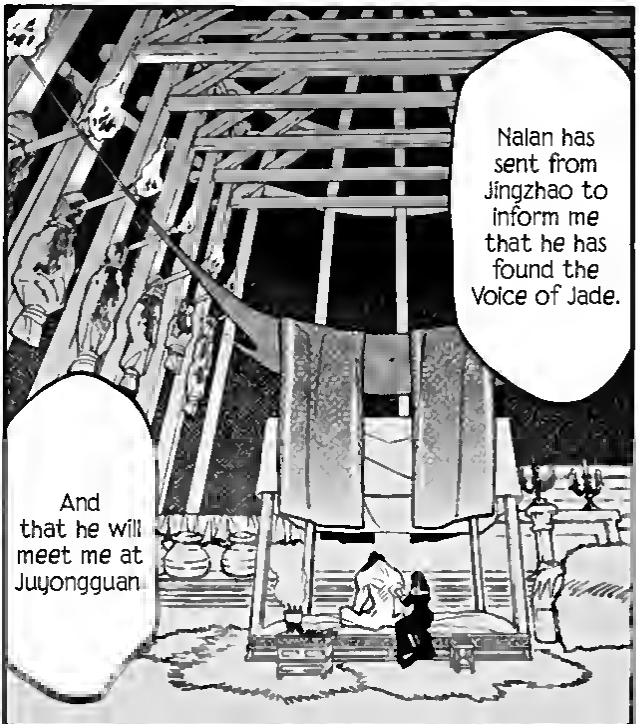

But...
If he takes Juyongguan and our forces enter the Jin capital, Zhongdu, we'll probably see an even bigger blaze.
Only the Great Khan, me, and those very close to us know of the Voice of Jade's existence

In other words, if a new Great Khan is chosen,
The endless invasion in pursuit of those jade slabs will stop.
.....
Once you know, there's no turning back.
He's burned all the Tangut writing he can find and still hates it so?
Why go so far?

The man who burned these letters into you back, my lord, most likely died without knowing the graveness of his sins.
Western Xia is long since burned away,

The curse of writing still lives.


...Perhaps, Lord Nalan...
may have noticed your pain, my lord.


Nalan has sent from Jingzhao to inform me that he has found the Voice of Jade.
And that he will meet me at Juyongguan.

No matter.

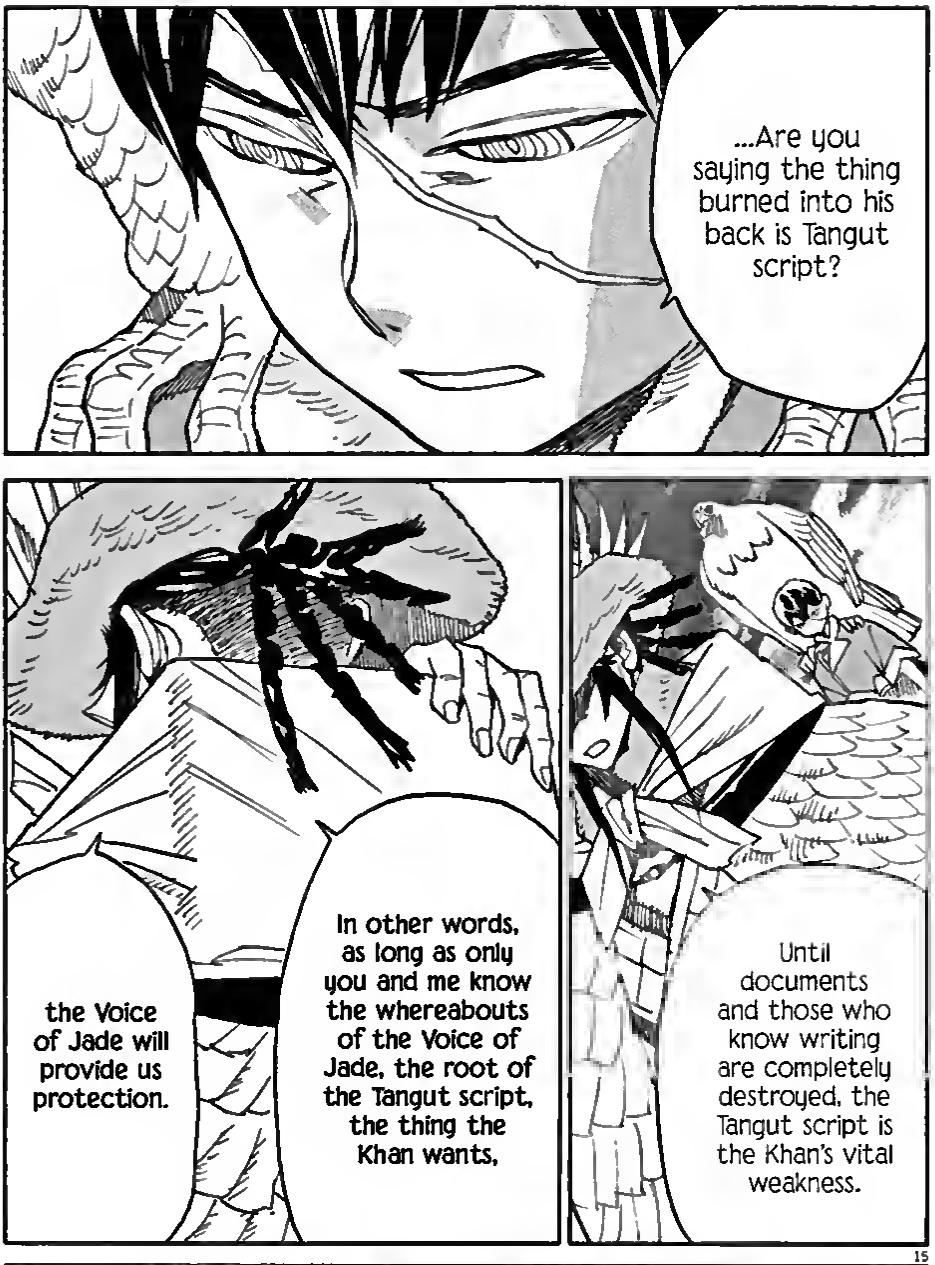
It waits for me to shatter the source of the curse.
This curse on my back endures though Western Xia is destroyed.

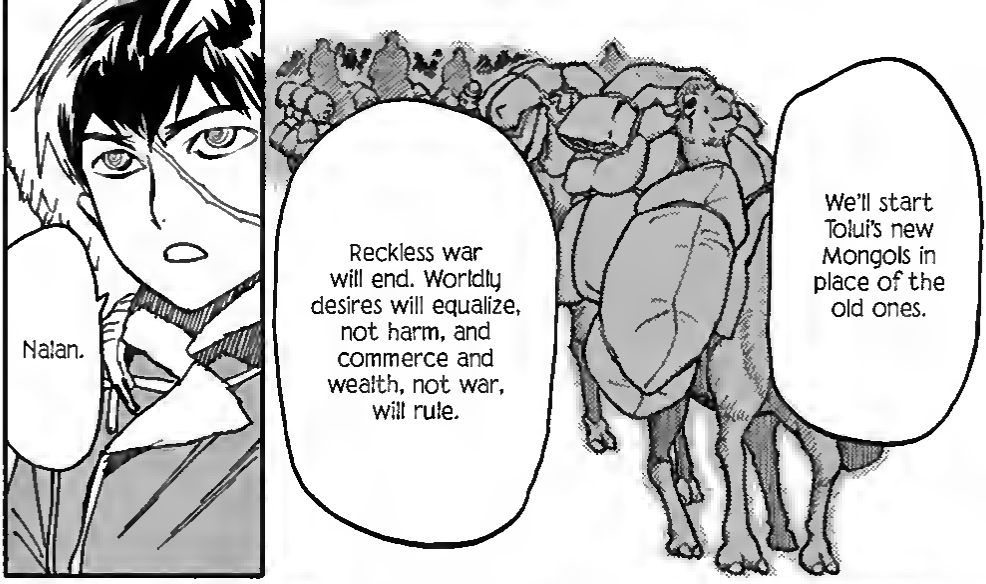
And he was not inciting me to treason either...
Nalan wouldn't deceive me.

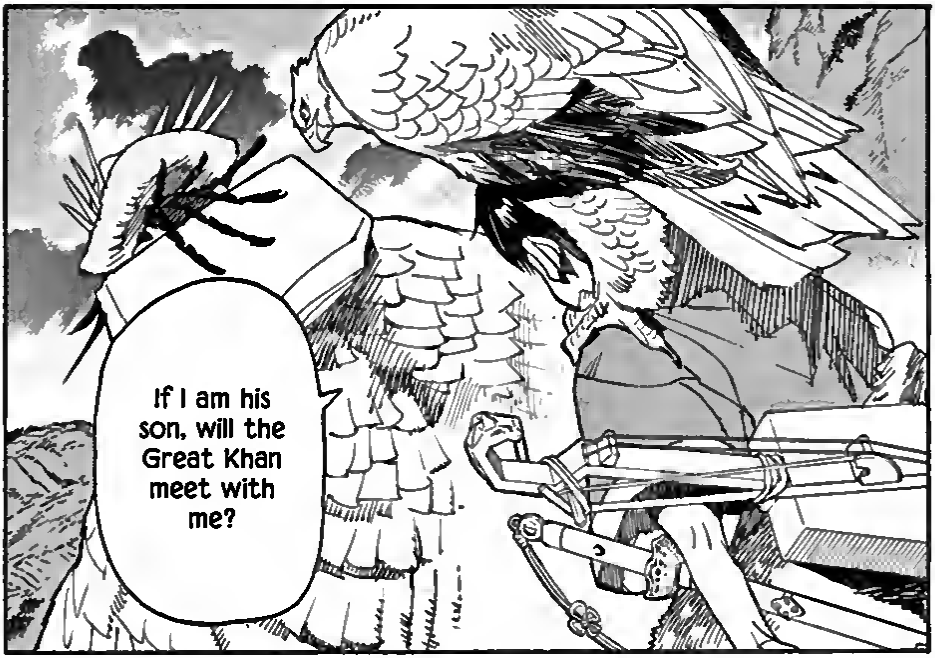
"A wound on his back."

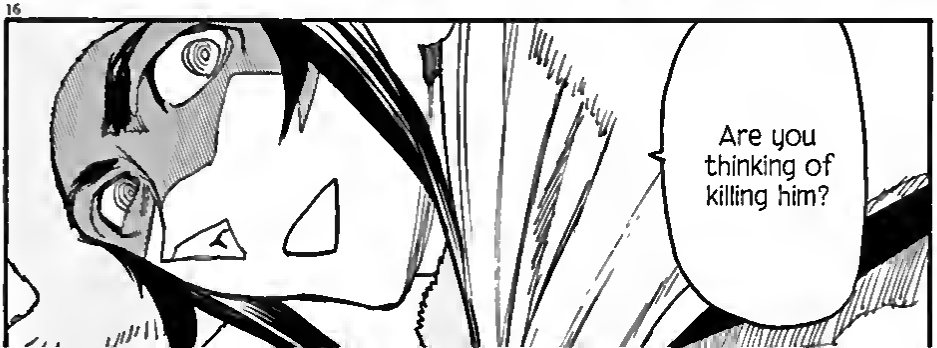
many peoples, even Khitan come over from the Jin and surrendered Tangut, will obey him.
The strength of the Mongols is the strength of the Khan. Precisely because he is a being to be feared,

Lord Tolui, no movements again tonight.
14
if that became known...
If he had a wound that disgraced him,
the Mongols will crumble.
Tangut, Khitan, various tribes... at worst, even long-serving generals.
If he can no longer command submission...
50


...Are you saying the thing burned into his back is Tangut script?
In other words, as long as only you and me know the whereabouts of the Voice of Jade, the root of the Tangut script, the thing the Khan wants,
the Voice of Jade will provide us protection.
Until documents and those who know writing are completely destroyed, the Tangut script is the Khan's vital weakness.
15
not just the half of the Voice of Jade I have, but the remainging half that you're hiding as well.
So, Yurul, we must assemble


Natan.
Reckless war will end. Worldly desires will equalize, not harm, and commerce and wealth, not war, will rule.
We'll start Tolui's new Mongols in place of the old ones.

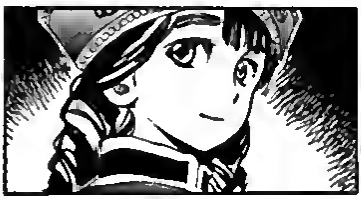

If I am his son, will the Great Khan meet with me?


Are you thinking of killing him?

I want to talk with him.
I won't run, and I won't threaten.

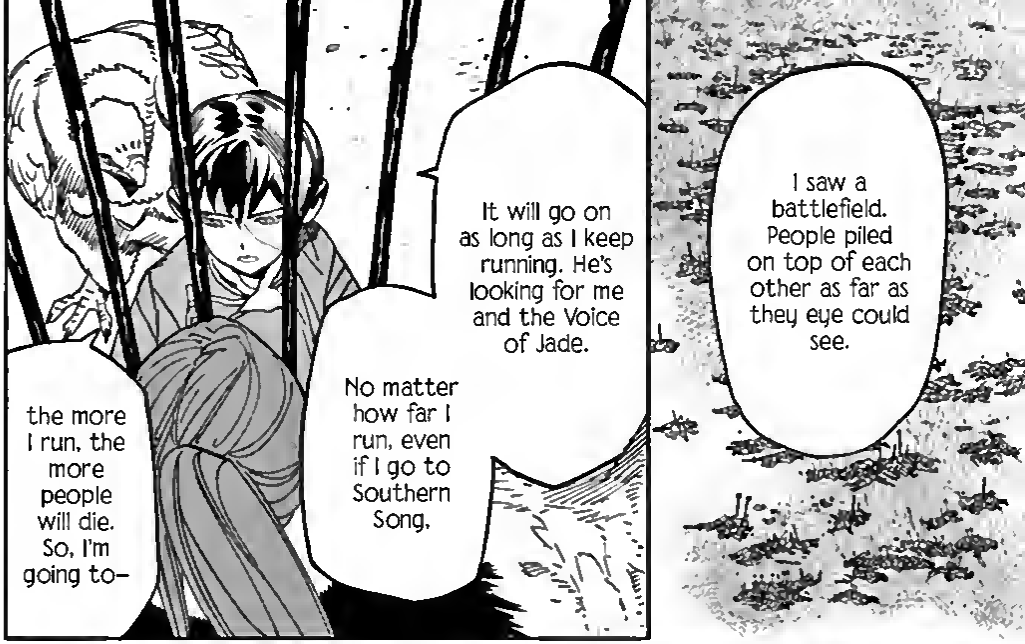
If the Great Khan single-mindedly hates and curses writing,
I may be able to tell him of its beauties.
Writing has brought me meetings and friends.
So...
Nalan?
He's too soft. Too foolish. More so than I could have imagined.
Does he really believe he can talk things out at this point?
...But!

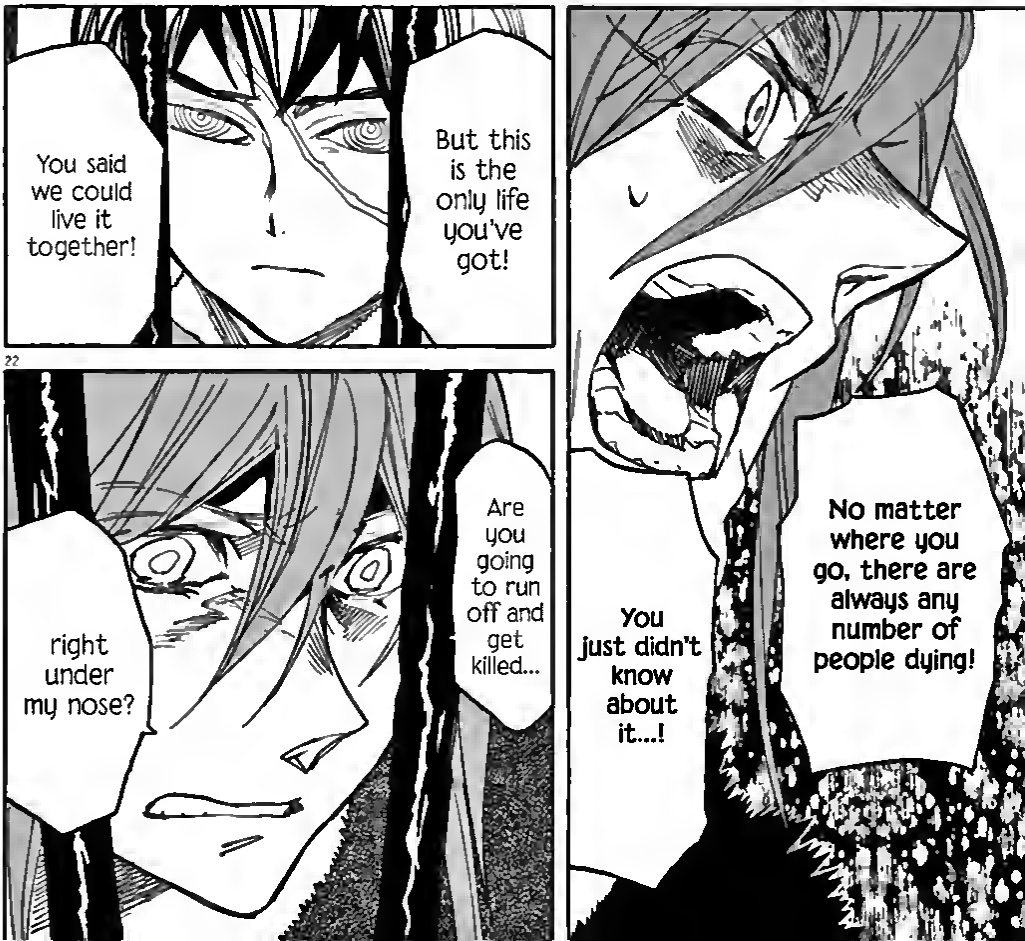
I thought you'd come.
Although that song just calls dogs.
Yurul?



20

I'll find it... and take it.
Yurul, does Nalan have the key to this place?
The bars are iron. There's no lock. The entrance is inside, then.
It's alright. Let's talk for now.
Time is precious.
I want to meet the Great Khan.
...What?


I saw a battlefield. People piled on top of each other as far as they eye could see.
It will go on as long as I keep running. He's looking for me and the Voice of Jade.
No matter how far I run, even if I go to Southern Song,
the more I run, the more people will die. So, I'm going to–


You said we could live it together!
But this is the only life you've got!
No matter where you go, there are always any number of people dying!
You just didn't know about it...!
Are you going to run off and get killed...
right under my nose?

We were able to trust each other.

That's why I'm going to talk to him.

I want you to go on ahead with Boldu and the Voice of Jade.
When I get back from our talk, I'll follow you.

Why have I missed your scent so much?
24
!
WHAAAAA?
HUH?
UM,
25

It's the Mongol camp.
A fire...?

clack clack
Some-one's coming.

26

I'm glad I got to meet you.
In spite of every-thing,
Yurul, I...

won't I, Shut Hell...!?
...I'll see you again soon,
"But as long as your past pursues you, you're not so much unnecessary as you are dangerous."
"I told you Yuru! doesn't need you anymore"
All I could do was kill, anyway.
That's fine.

Even if we can't see each other, I do love you.
That should be enough...
Before Yurul gets killed.
29
Yurul.
28
I'll take the Great Khan's head with my own hands.
Even if I'm your father's killer, you won't come after me.
Because you aren't capable of hate.

The Mongol stores are away from the front lines, so why are they burning?
Given the Mongols' superiority, this was no Jin night raid.

[Chapter LXIII]

The King's Head

Tiger man.
What have you come all the way to Juyongguan to bite at?
"Shut Hell."
So, you didn't flee Jin and go to Southern Song with Yurui.

Yurul is here too, then.
So, you're still after Yurul's head!
But right now, it isn't his head I want.
You're too late.

"Shut Hell,"
your head is no longer of any value.
The Mongols, who burned the writing of the Tangut, talk of letters of their own.
In those letters, it is written that my people were purged for the disgrace of theft and treachery.
As long as there are Mongols, anyway.

The head of the Mongols' Great Khan?
PIOP
PIOP
...You and I have taken each other's heads.
Are we after the same head today?
...I see you're a greedy one.
"Shut Hell."

I blend in with the night and the smoke.
Those Mongol fire arrows... There won't be a second volley. They've lost sight of me.
Did "Shut Hell" get away too?
Use regular bolts.
I told you not to use the fire arrows, didn't I?
ゴホッ

Don't burn up any more food.
10
Salhi, what about that black horseman?
I thought he resembled a man who fought in the invasion of Western Xia.
I knew him at a glance, old man. That was
the Black Tiger of the former Tsog tribe...

God's Arrow, Harabal.

!
12
Bas-
tard.
You
think
you can
run?

Turn around, Salhi.

Tch.
Close one!

!!!
Friend of the Black Tiger, huh!
Wrong.

!!
My horse
...!
Battle
Follow.

ドドド

whinney

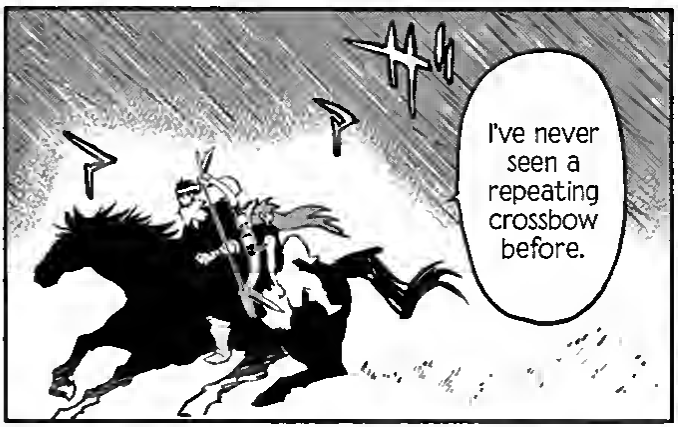
Their guards will need reinforcements.
There are two other caches of food.
Carry out the undamaged stores.
For the man they called God's Arrow to stoop so low... it's too bad.
Has the depth of his hate for the murder of his tribe driven him to side with Jin?
To think that God's Arrow Harabal would burn our stores.
The Black Tiger's the only survivor of the Tsog, right?
But who was that who stole my horse, old man?

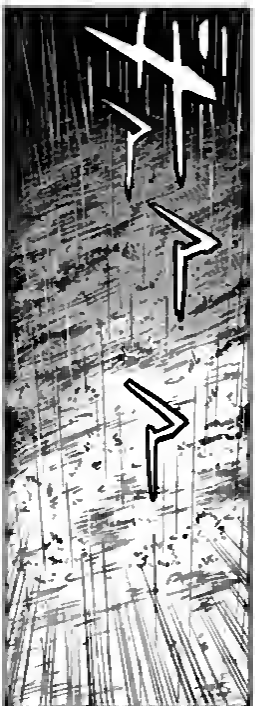
Did the Black Tiger pick up a wild dog somewhere?
Br rr
Brr
Looks like an arrow graze.

ヒヒーン

ドゴ

We'll hide ourselves for the night.


I've never seen a repeating crossbow before.



The one's we used only held one bolt at a time.

Every-
thing is
changing.
The
ways of
war are
changing.
Even
those whose
bravery was
once sung
can end
up slaves
and die as
traitors.
...I never
thought
about it.
but...

Who are you today?
if I care for a Mongol like Yurul,
I guess that makes me a traitor to Western Xia.
Recently, people have been calling me "Shut Hell."

thought you'd come
Although that song just calls dogs.
It seems I just look like a dog.
It's strange.
Well ...
Heh.
26
Is that funny?

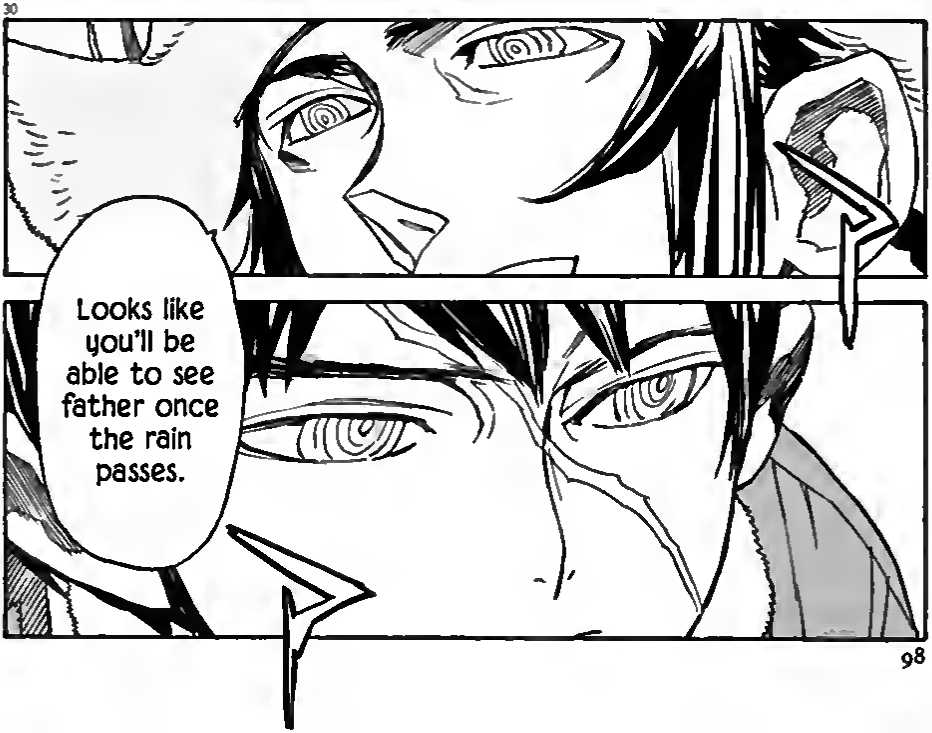
HA HA HA HA HA
...Just a dog who failed to die, huh?
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
HAH!
HA...
HA
27
Fi-nished?
My cheeks are worn out.
We both did that.

Yes.
And then "Shut Hell" went running off?
A storm...
Yes.
you're diffe-rent.
Oh, Melu-mi,
girls sure are simple.

Harabal the tiger, a traitor with an intense hatred for the Mongols,
and the Tangut bandit "Shut Hell" are in collusion...
"Shut Hell" probably is too. She's just better at seeing what right in front of her than the big picture.
Two pawns at Juyong-guan, just as I thought.
29
They'll kill the current Khan,
and afterwards they'll be shot down together, immediately.
And the one to lure the Great Khan out will be...

Yurul.

30


Looks like you'll be able to see father once the rain passes.

He says he's going to talk to his father.
Yurui is in prison.
To the Mongols, he must still be a traitor.
So, before they meet...

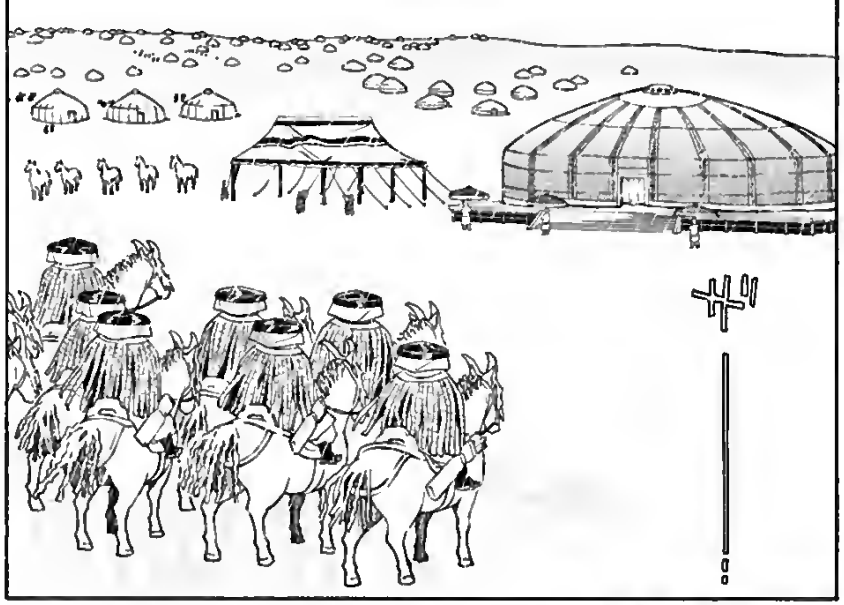
When the storm passes, it will happen.
The head of the Mongols – of the Great Khan –

is going to move.

[Chapter LXIV]

Happenings and Hearts

3



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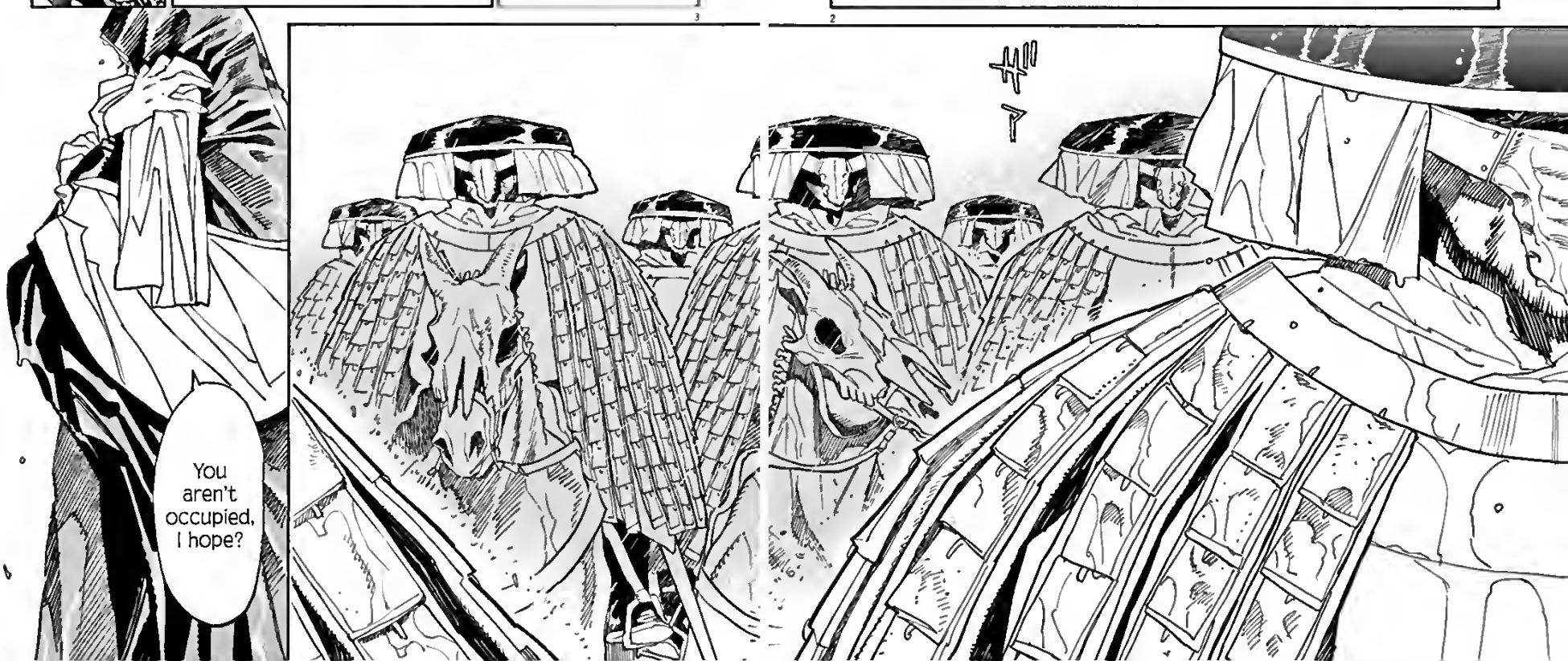


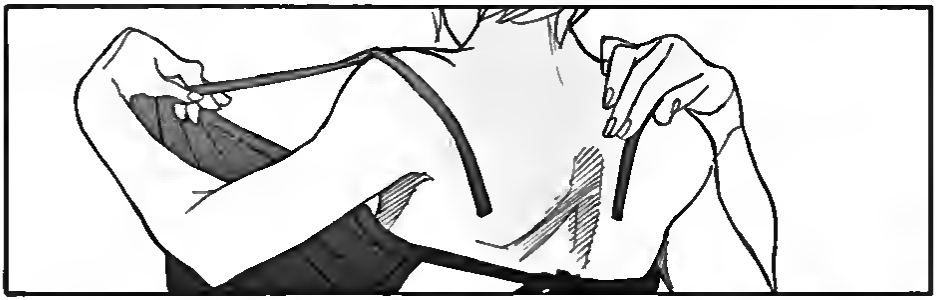
Food stores have been burned, and the deadline to take Juyongguan has gotten a good deal tighter.
When the rain lets up, my generals will make their move.
Do as you please with the garments in that room.
I've had the Princess Consort and the others wait outside.
I merely wish to offer you a change of clothes
Please do not misunderstand me... Veronika.

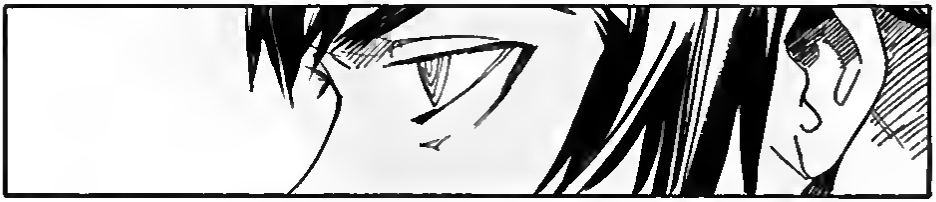
Thank you very much, your highness.
because you're wet from the rain.

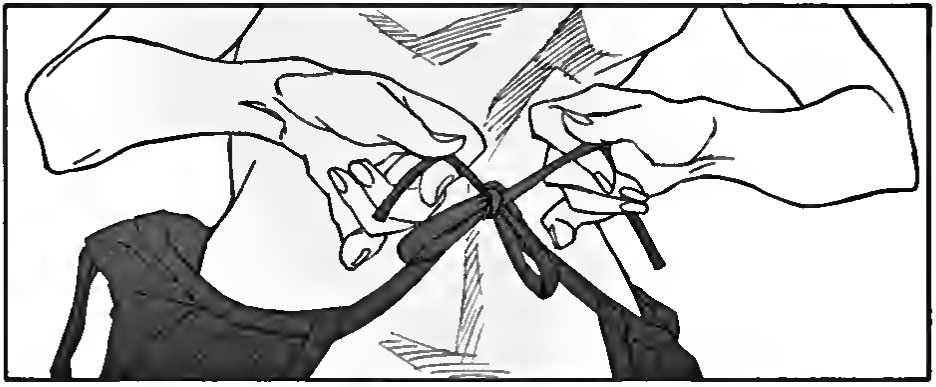
Is it because it's so humid ...?
Be at ease.
There is no need to hesitate on father's account.
This sudden rain came up as soon as I quit my lord.
I don't know what I would have done without you.

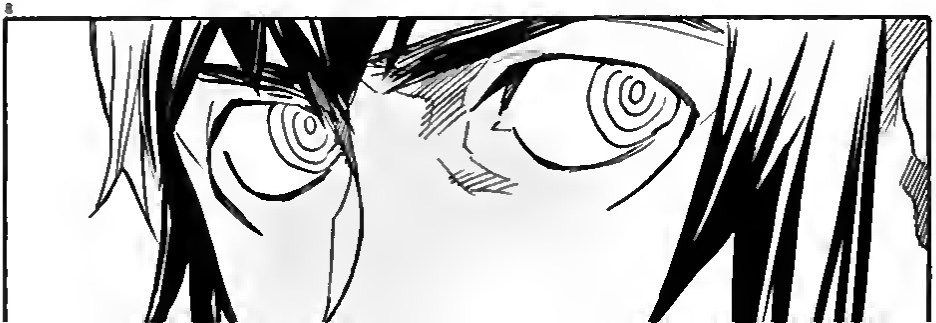
She smells of father.
Hee hee.
I'm not like his mistresses.
The only reason I am permitted to touch my lord...
Rustling clothes ...

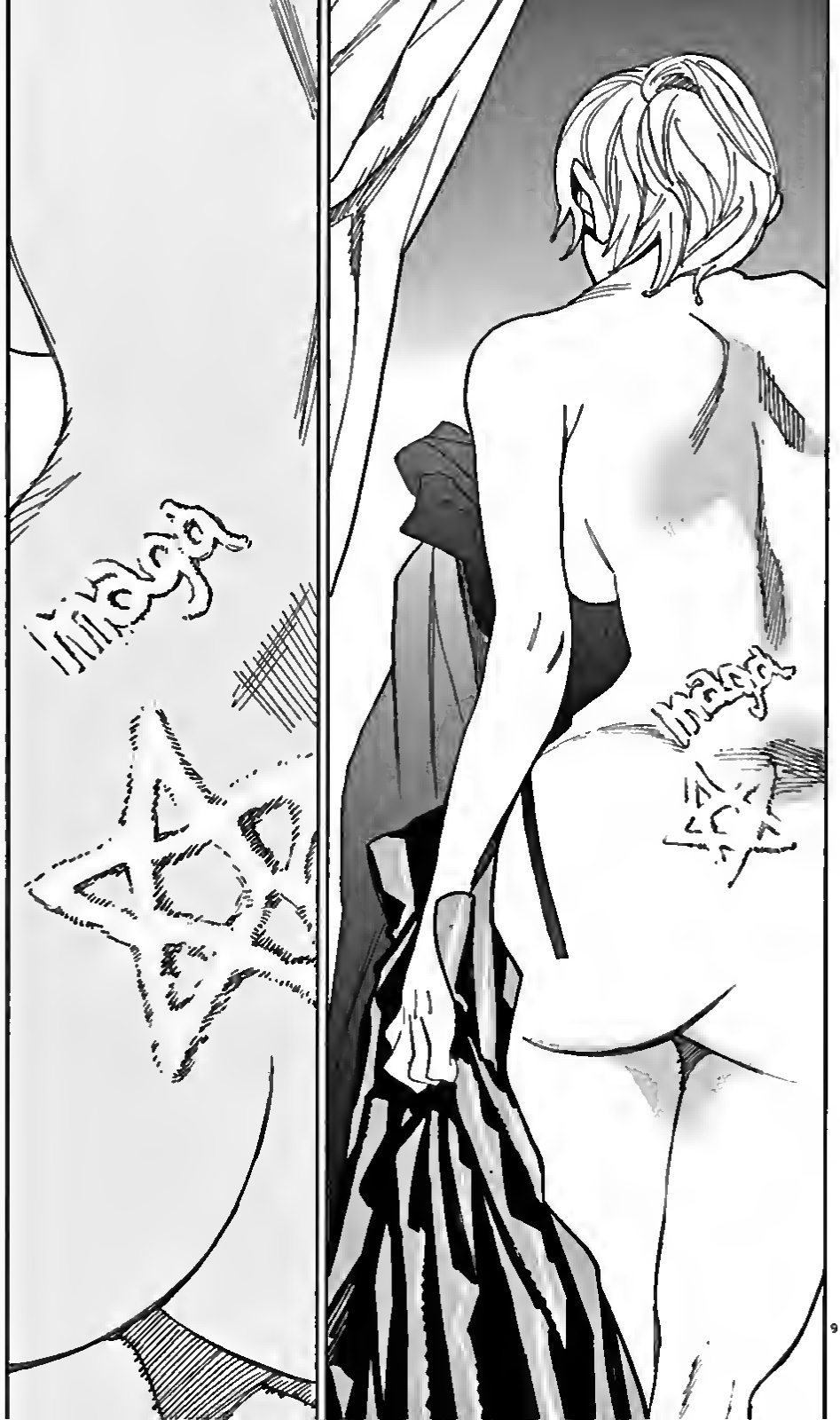
I only go to ask if he has any pain.
is to see to the state of his health.
Does she think I'm a child?
An obvious lie.
She's too pale.

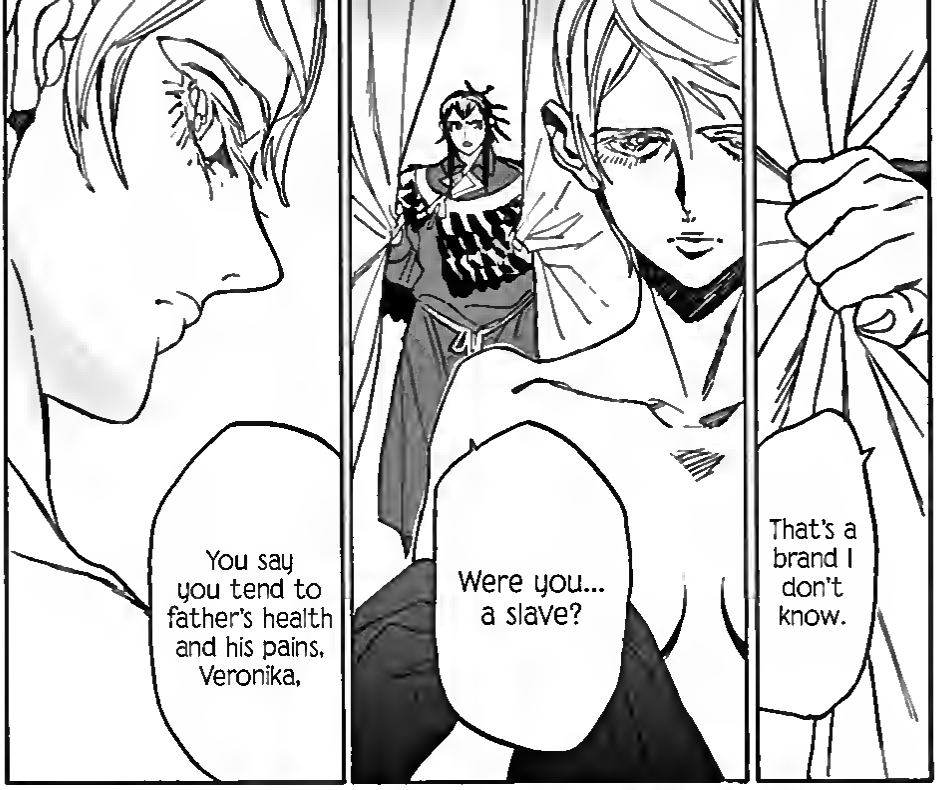




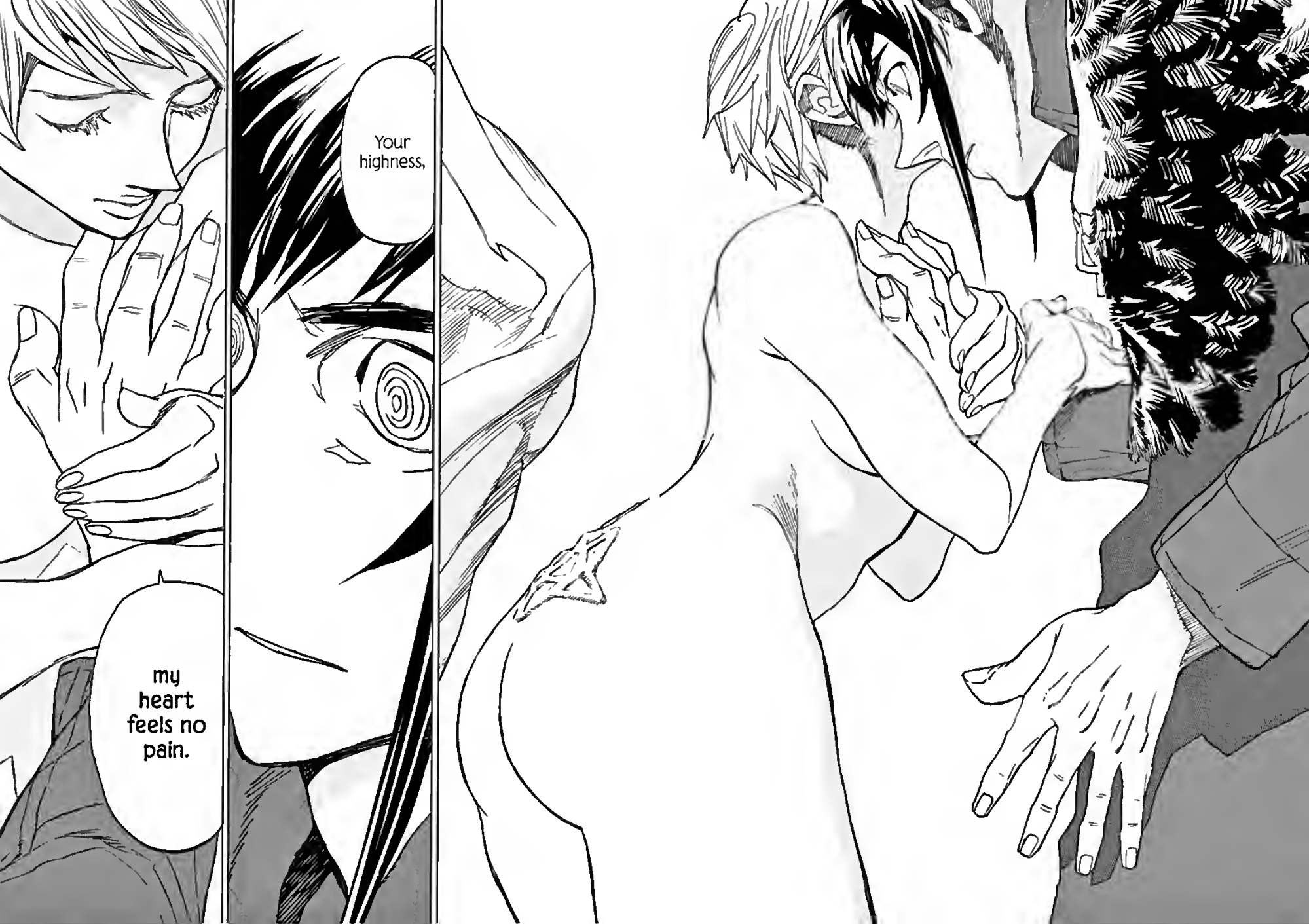




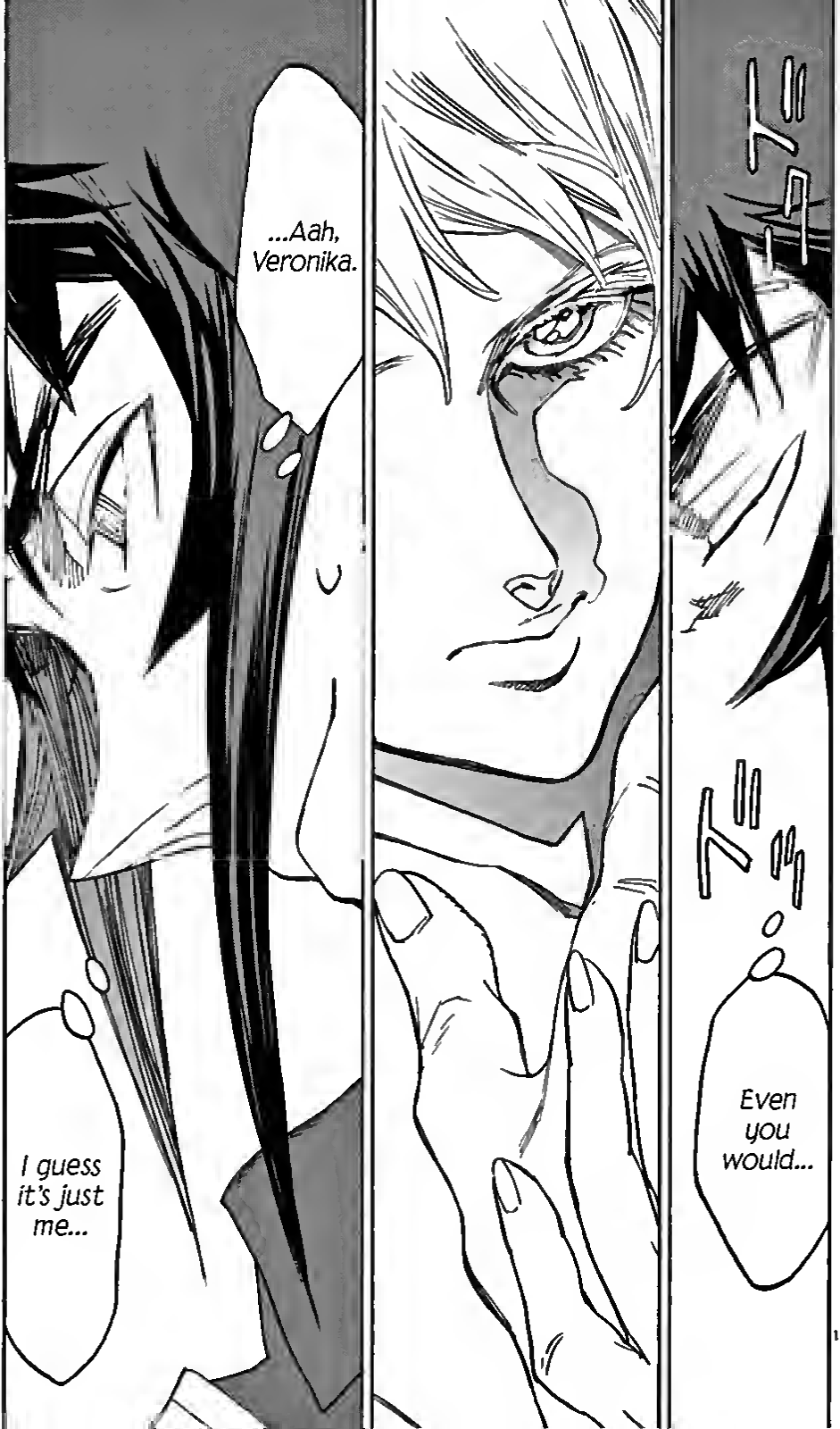



You say you tend to father's health and his pains, Veronika,
Were you... a slave?
That's a brand I don't know.

but who tends to the pain in your body... in your heart?


Your highness,
my heart feels no pain.

...I'm sure, if I squeezed hard...
If I pulled your hips close and touched that scar...
it would hurt.

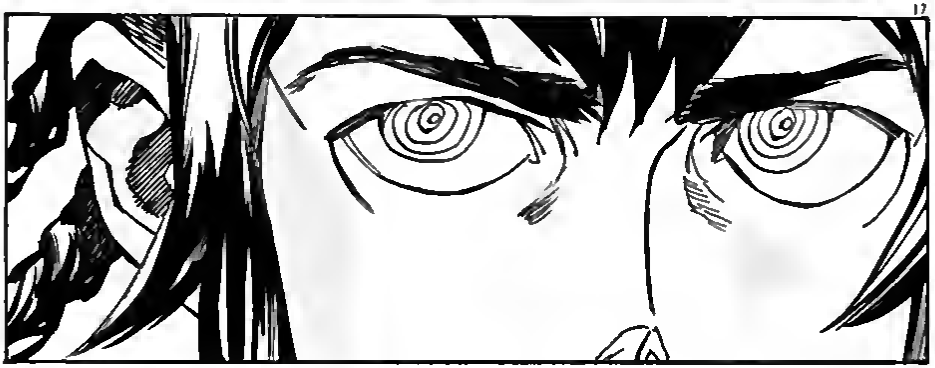

...Aah, Veronika.
I guess it's just me...
Even you would...

...Your heart-beat isn't racing at all.
I see. You're cool and composed...
just like always.

My heart is made of lead.
...Lord Nalan knows that very well.

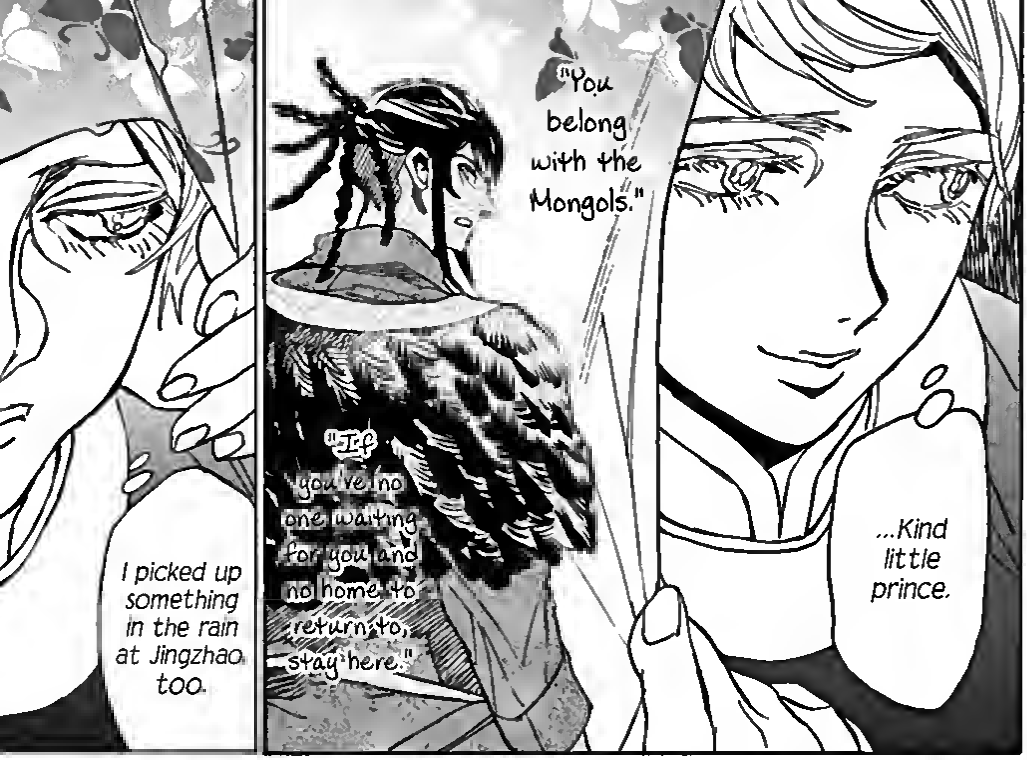
...Do you speak with Nalan often?
I can't say I recall it fondly, but...

Lord Nalan is the sort who could never forgive this scar.



Vero-nika.

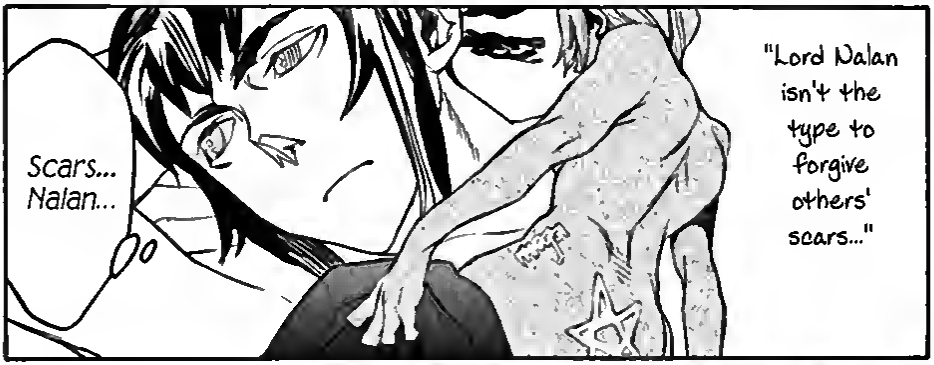
You belong with the Mongols.
When we've taken this place and subjugated Jin, we should have twice the number of craftsman to make them and soldiers to wield them.
I am recording the manner of handling and contructing the new crossbows with the new letters you have given the Mongols.
18
If you've no one waiting for you and no home to return to, stay here.
I like the rain...
How are you, my lady?
Hee hee...
ﾊﾞﾝｯ
ﾊﾞﾝｯ

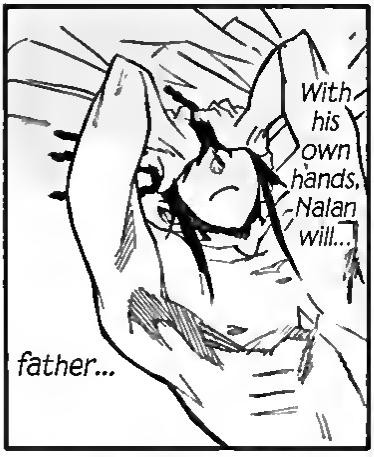

"You belong with the Mongols."
"If you've no one waiting for you and no home to return to, stay here."
I picked up something in the rain at Jingzhao too.
...Kind little prince.

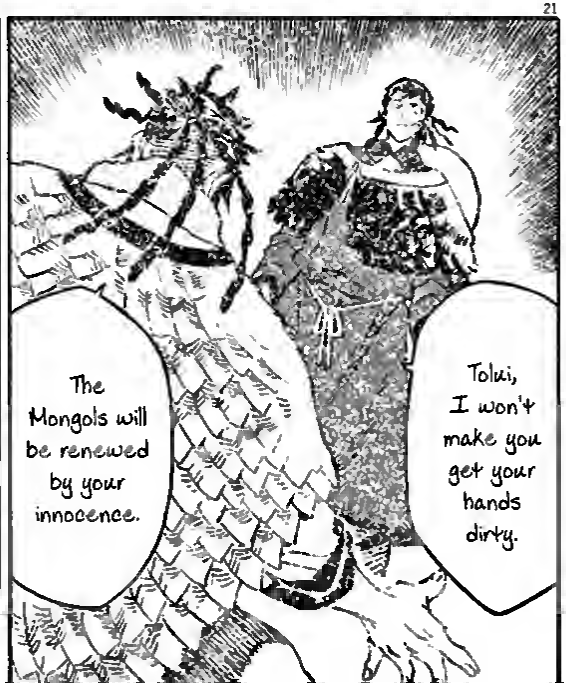
"Shut. Hell."

Just that night, you smiled...
When I saw you before, that night in the desert, you weren't "Shut Hell."
20
When we met again in the rain at Jingzhao, your wound wouldn't heal.
I have no way of knowing what roadside you died on.
I wonder why I'm remembering you today?
Nothing can come of it...

loves father.
Vero-nika


Scars... Nalan...
"Lord Nalan isn't the type to forgive others' scars..."

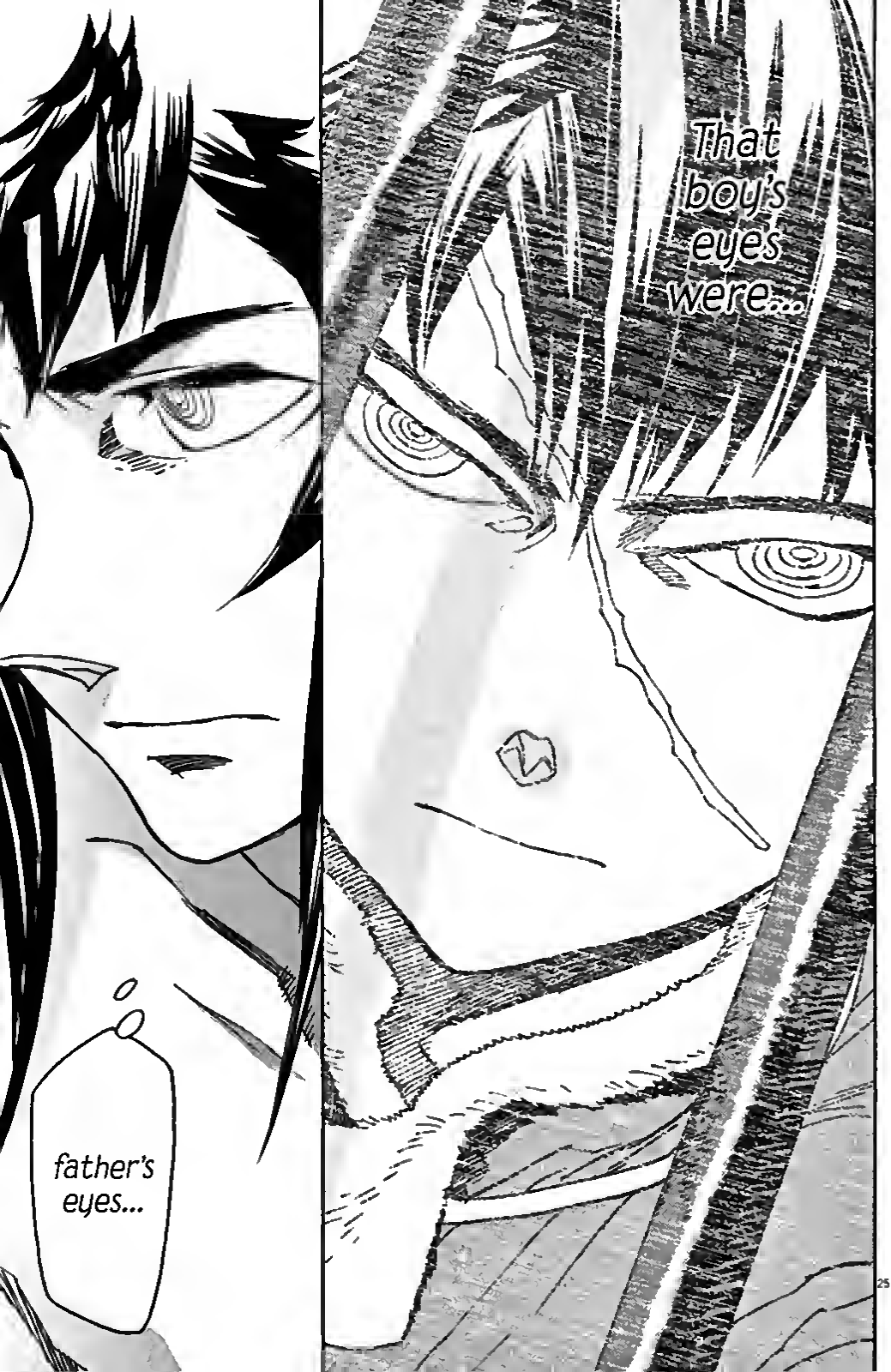

With his own hands, Nalan will...
father...


The Mongols will be renewed by your innocence.
Tolui, I won't make you get your hands dirty.

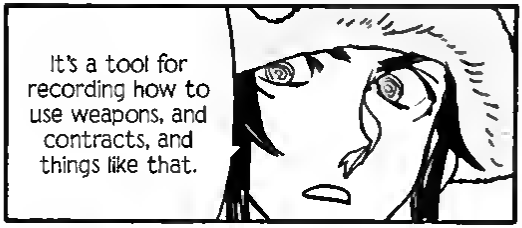
do you not mind collateral damage?
when you talk about a new unblemished Mongols...
...Nalan,

Fire to the food stores..!
23
But I couldn't see signs of a Jin night raid...
tap
tap
If you didn't return to camp, where are you, Nalan?
No
Nalan headed this way
I must speak with him before I return

Just now ...
Is that you, Nalan?
All I am is yours.
Whoever I try to fool, I will never lie to you.
But you were hiding some-thing.


That boy's eyes were...
father's eyes...

Writing down what you've been doing today, Yurul?


It's a tool for recording how to use weapons, and contracts, and things like that.

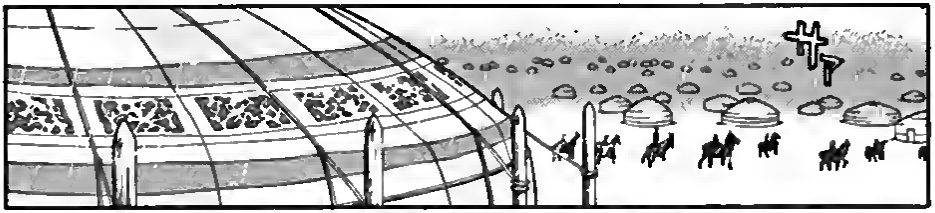
Writing is convenient, but you should use it for something more meaningful.
While filling up what little paper I have left, I've learned to write smaller.

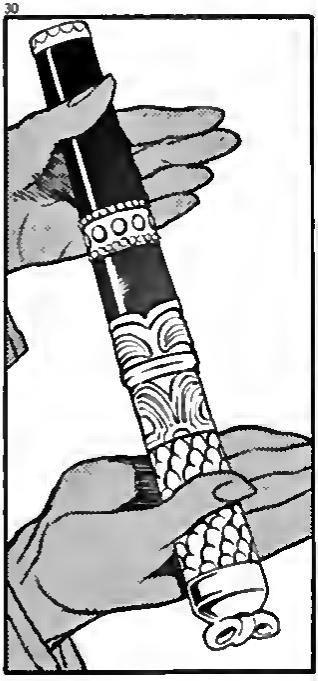
Whatever you're writing down so feverishly only has value to you.
If something happens to you, it'll be trash. That means you'll end up dying together.
...Because, son or not, you'll die for the crime of defying the Great Khan.

But they really are like that.
I've been thinking of letters like they were living things.
"Thank you"?
...Thank you, Nalan.
The things I've seen, and my heart,
came out of me, and now they're living with me.
If they're going to die with me, then writing really is alive.

Events and hearts. One day, Nalan...
if everyone records what they do and feel,
and we gather as many as we can together.
What letters record is... happenings and hearts.
that cluster won't belong to anyone, and it won't be any one color.
With that cluster of happenings and hearts, you might even be able to read the times themselves.
Yurul, that look in your eyes...
They shine just like father's,
like they're burning from deep inside.
...Yeah.

I'll manipulate hearts, and make things happen.
Happenings and hearts, huh.
This is the beginning.
I'm sorry you don't have much left, but would you mind giving me a scrap?





I was instructed to present you this privately, and with all haste.

31

"Slave of Western Xia"
...
NALAN.

[Chapter LXVI]

Swallowing

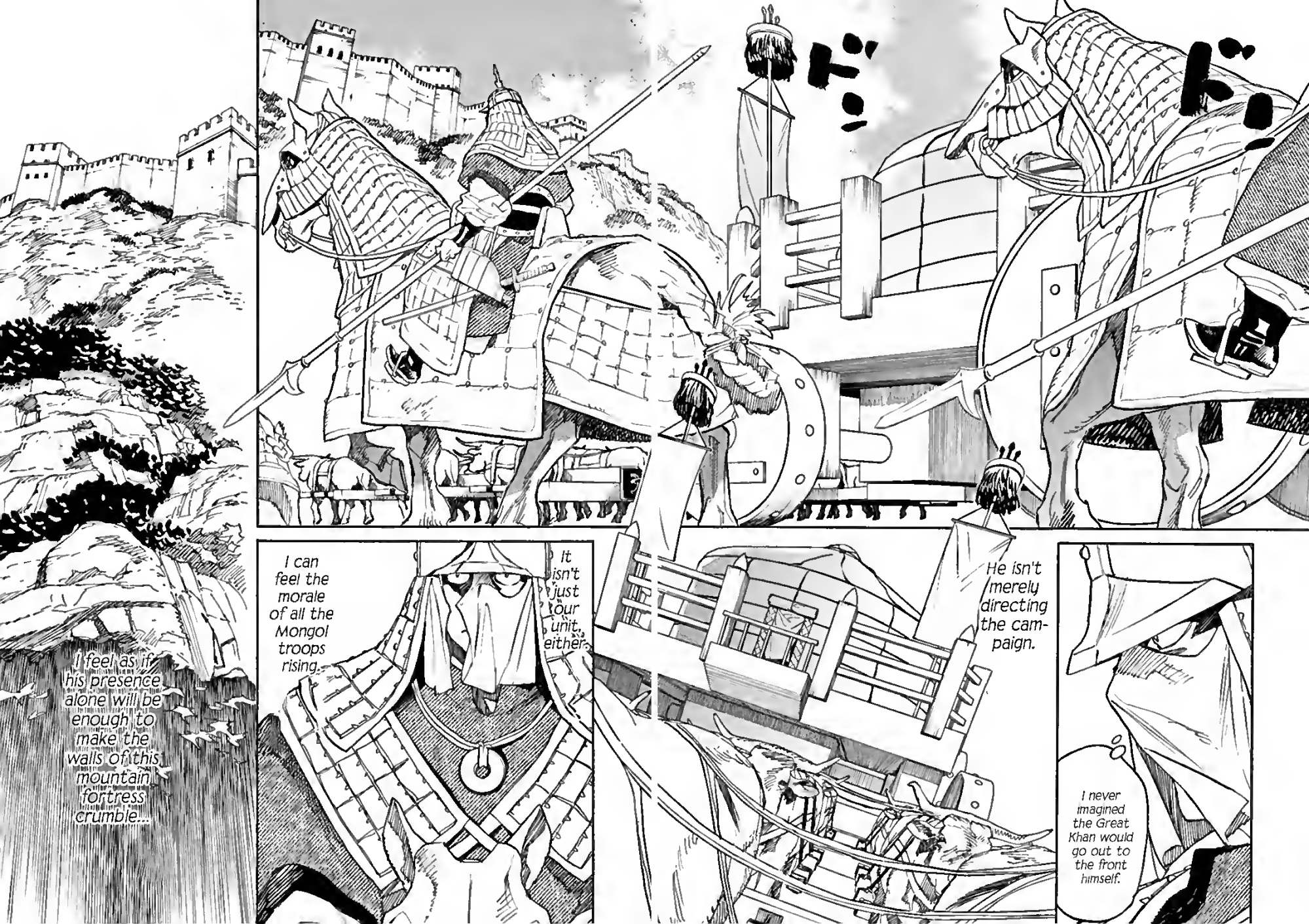
"Slave of Western Xia"...
But it says "slave" on your back, doesn't it...?

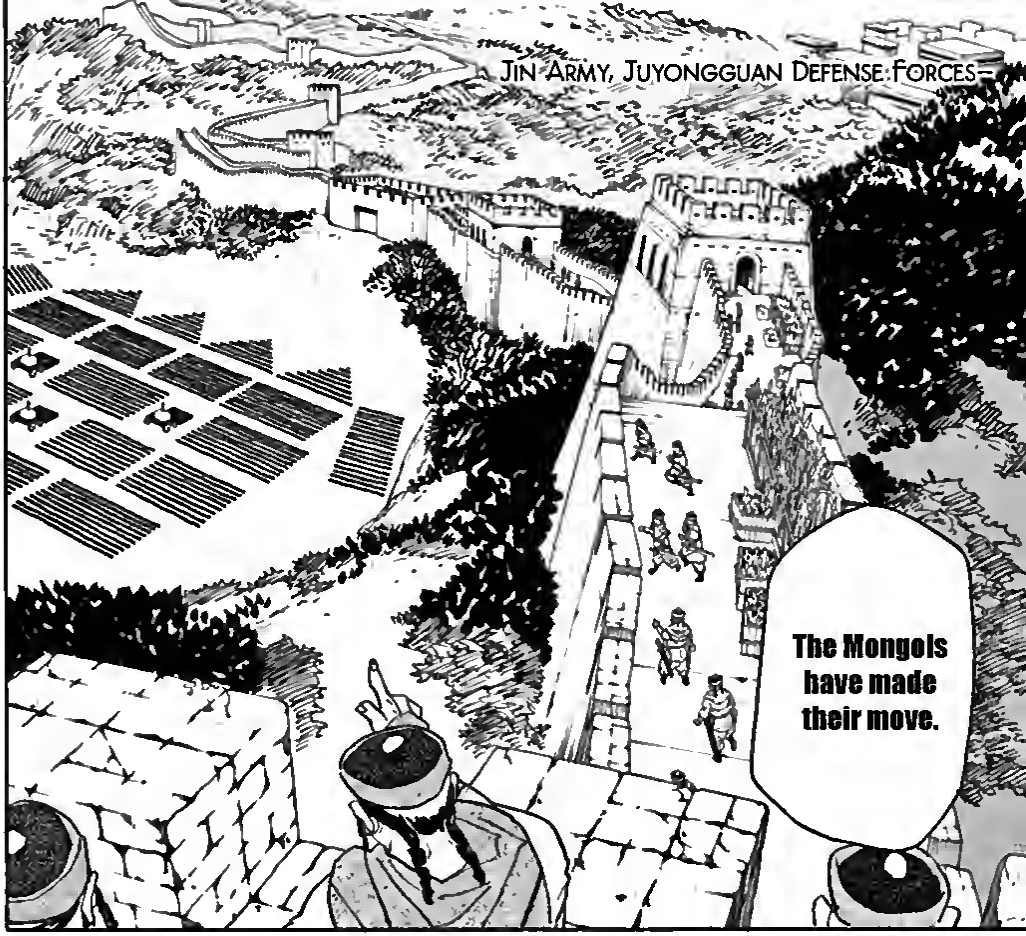
Give up.
These letters on your back won't go away
Even if they can't read the letters
as long as they know that's what it says, it will look the same to them...
If you write "sand" on a sack, no one will try to taste the grains inside
Even if it was salt, it becomes sand

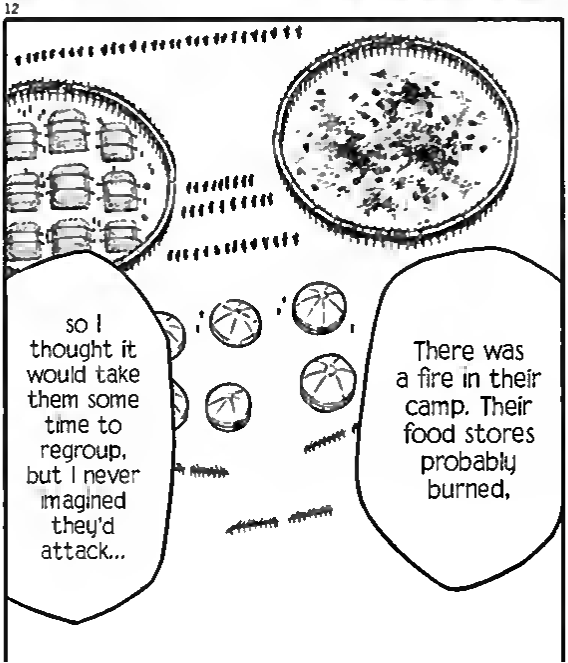
My soul will not be tamed.
If you go on denying something that can't be changed until your mind snaps, you'll just die.
No matter how you deny it those letters that say "slave" will tame your soul from within.
But hanging your head and getting used to it will keep you alive.
Giving up and swallowing things that can't be changed is what human hearts do.

Who-
ever
my
ene-
my
may
be.
That I'm going to destroy them.
That I'll trample them to the ends of the earth.
...I'll make my enemies swallow it.
I'll make them swallow that I'm no slave.
You can swallow it. You have no choice.
Do that and you'll survive

ドドドド
ドドドド
ドドドド
ドドドド


I feel as if his presence alone will be enough to make the walls of this mountain fortress crumble...
I can feel the morale of all the Mongol troops rising.
It isn't just our unit, either.
He isn't merely directing the campaign.
I never imagined the Great Khan would go out to the front himself.


The Mongols have made their move.


so I thought it would take them some time to regroup, but I never imagined they'd attack...
There was a fire in their camp. Their food stores probably burned,

They shouldn't have any way to attack the mountain and the walls...
Even those new crossbows aren't worth much at this range.

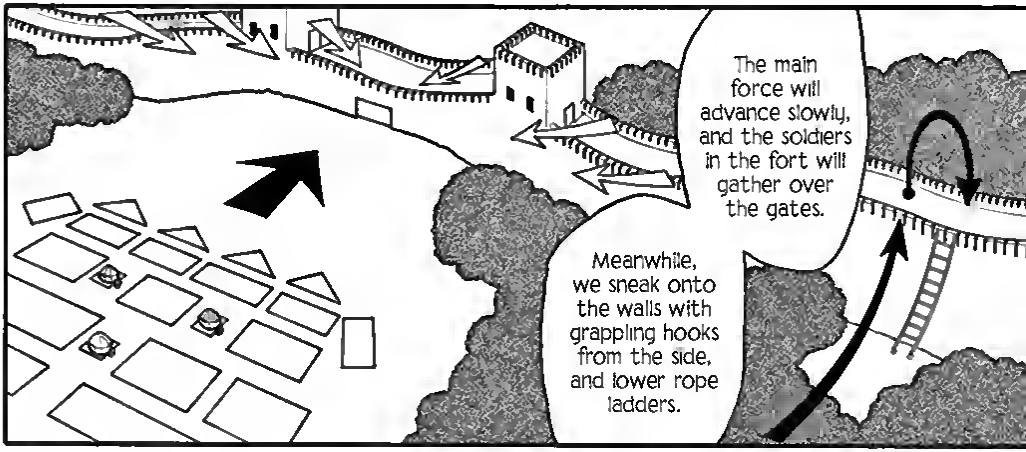
They plan to force their way through the main gate with a mounted charge.
Change stations. Take bows and arrows and concentrate defenses on that front.

...!
clink
Make it rain arrows on the Mongols' main force from over that gate.

14
This is it, men of Western Xia.
Falter or turn back and we shoot you dead.
Go, go!

We've had captive soldiers from Western Xia train with grappling hooks.
They die if they fail, so they're hard workers.
I was going to shoot fire arrows like crazy to draw attention, old man, but thanks to the rain
the soldiers with hooks were able to hide themselves right up against the foot of the walls.
If it hadn't rained, the food stores that were set on fire would have burned longer, as well.
Even the heavens side with his majesty.

It's tha cantral army that's a diversian.


The main force will advance slowly, and the soldiers in the fort will gather over the gates.
Meanwhile, we sneak onto the walls with grappling hooks from the side, and lower rope ladders.

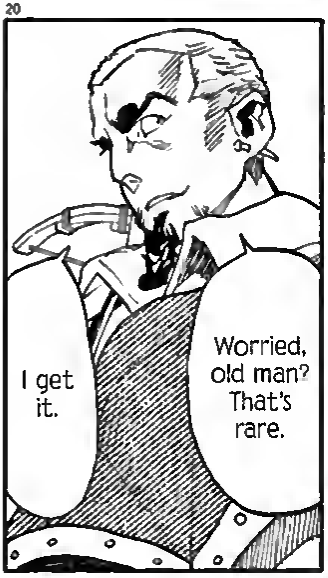
It'll be a whole different story from shooting up at the walls from far below.
The fire arrows troops will follow.

A smell number will decide the outcome.
But they'll open e whole in Juyonggu-en's defenses thet you can spot et a glence.
Salhi,
his majesty appears to be... pondering something.
When you went to report that fire to him?

The "Black Tiger" has returned, then. Very well.
I see. So the fire in the stores was Harabal.
Bring his head. Display it.
Sholga, Salhi, if you kill the tiger...
I guess that head he wants would get ruined if you hit it with a fire arrow.
If he did, we're lucky he didn't send our heads flying.
Perhaps he counted the days the army can move on our remaining food stores...

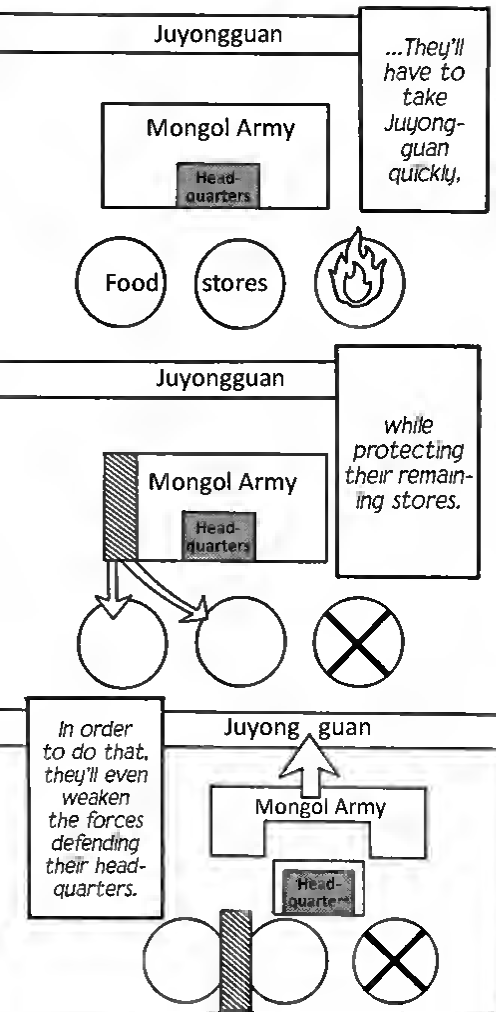
He hasn't shown himself since then, but he'll come.
The black tiger of the Tsog, God's Arrow Harabal.
The one that burned is empty, then.
Send the soldiers on guard on to the intact ones as well.
Don't let them lay a hand on our supplies again.
Gene-ral!
The transfer of the remaining food stores is complete.
They've been divided between the remaining unharmed collection points.
Old man.
...The Black Tiger wasn't alone, you know.

...Salhi,
do not take too much pleasure in fire and swords.


Worried, old man? That's rare.
I get it.

That was "Shut Hell." She had a hook...
I've never seen a woman like that.

So, they're attacking the gates with bows and gunpowder without any clever schemes.
They've made their move.

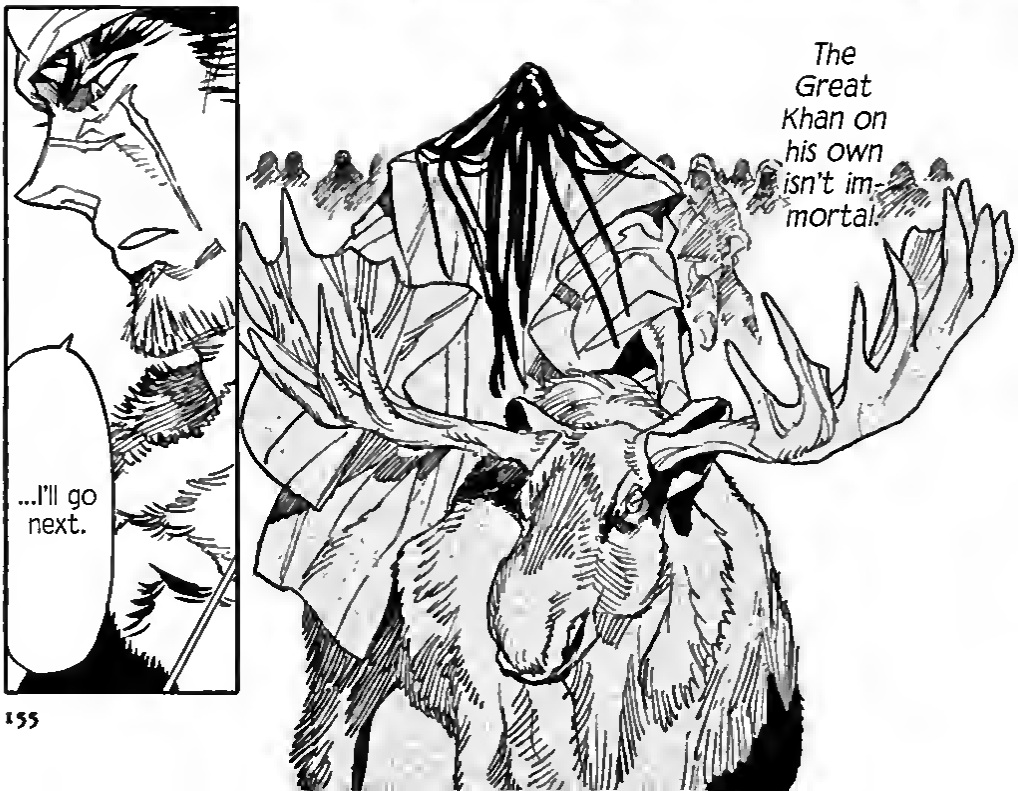

Juyongguan
Mongol Army
Head-quarters
Food
stores
...They'll have to take Juyong-guan quickly,
Juyongguan
Mongol Army
Head-quarters
while protecting their remain-ing stores.
In order to do that, they'll even weaken the forces defending their head-quarters.
Juyong guan
Mongol Army
Head-quarters

And, as I thought, they've split their forces to guard the remaining food stores.
Unless the whole army withdraws, the Mongols have no time to spare.

Even so, they'll have dozens... hundreds of horseman in reserve.
That's where I'll strike.

...Western Xia,
Which means I can't be thrifty with arrows.
No need for an escape route. I'll cut right into them.

and Jin are all destroyed.
the Tsog.
23

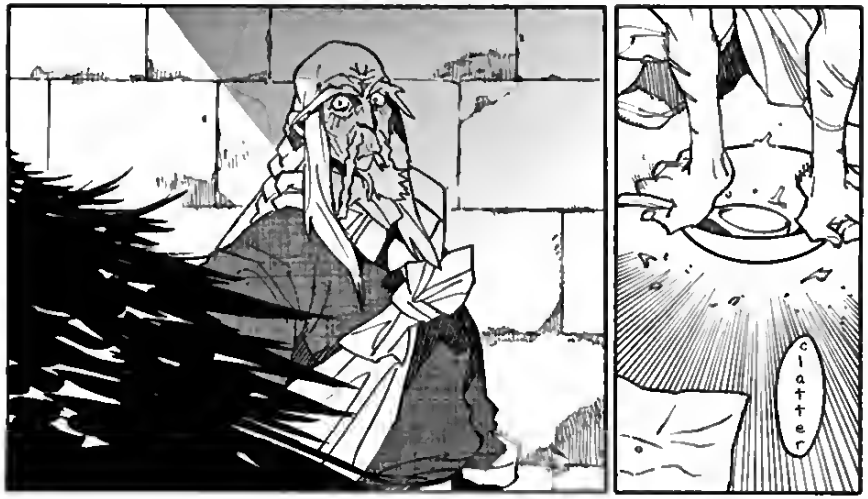

...I'll go next.
The Great Khan on his own isn't immortal.

...If you're going to go after the Great Khan's head anyway...
Yurul is in prison. He says he's going to meet with the Great Khan.
...So, before that..
...Then you can keep living while you chase me!
"Shut Hell."
...Yurul. Both of you will probably die here.
If the Great Khan goes first, I don't mind following him.
Everything disappears equally.
It might be too soon but...

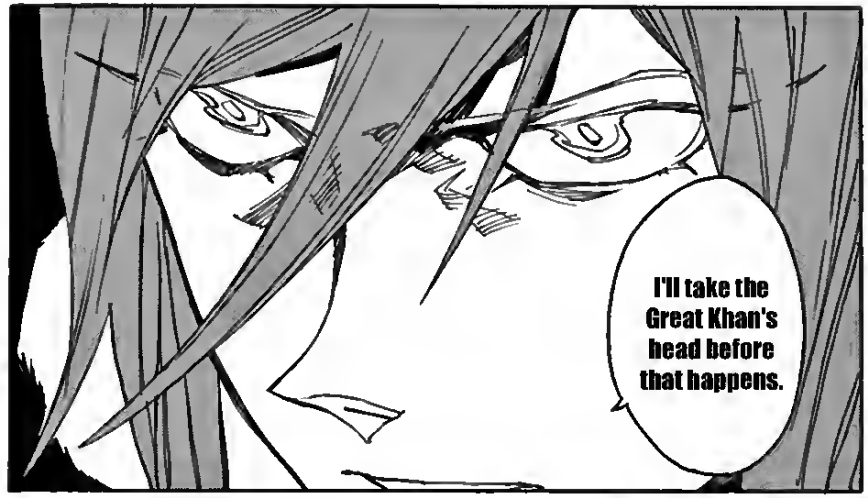
I'll show you the next one.
Now, I'm going...
Everything disappears.
But it disappears equally.

ガツガツ
She eats like it's her last meal.
Master Harabal? He is at Juyongguan as well?
Yeah. He's after revenge.
...That evening, I could see the fire in the Mongol camp from the village.
That was...

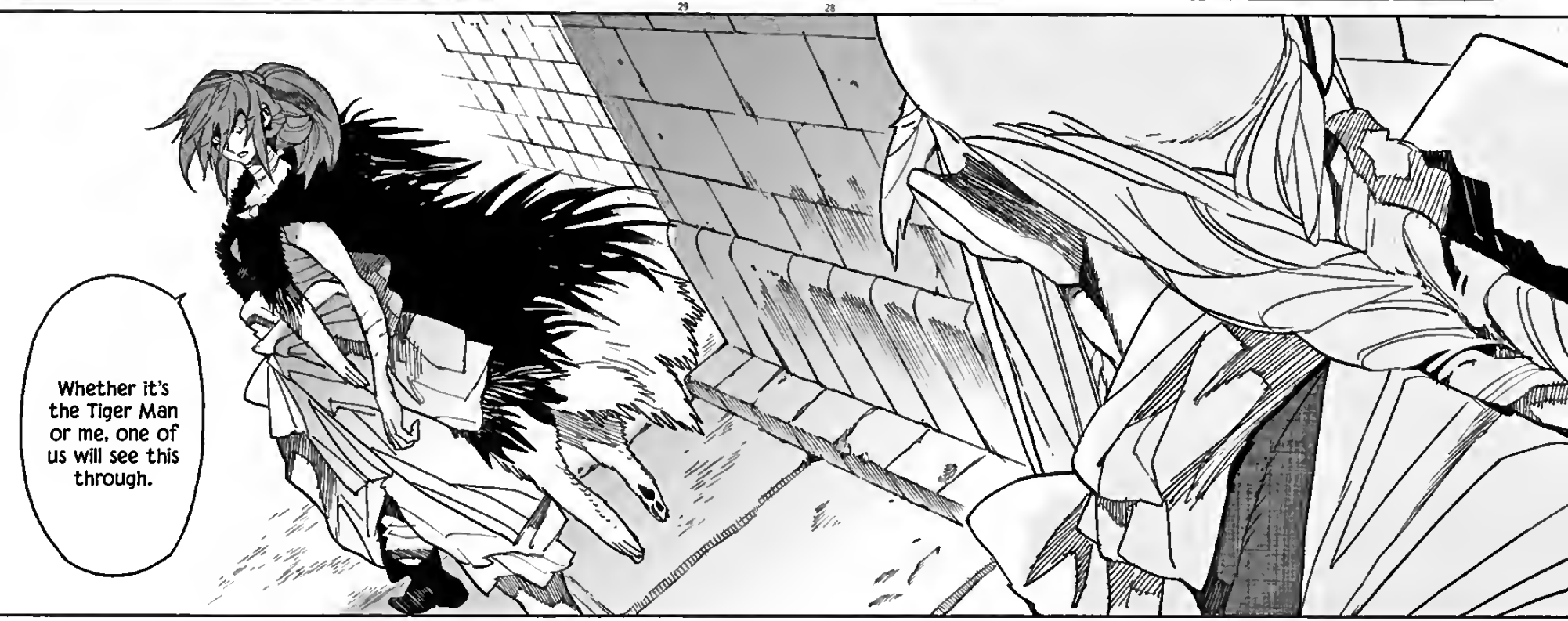
Yurul said for you to take half the Voice of Jade and go on ahead.
Nalan probably has the key.
I followed a song like a dog call, and found him in a jail in a cliff.
Boldu, Yurul is alive.
He says he's going to meet the Mongols' Great Khan.
...!
If that happens, Yurul will be killed.
The half of the Voice of Jade they have will probably be smashed, too.
There's no time to find Nalan and steal the key to his cell...


clatter

29

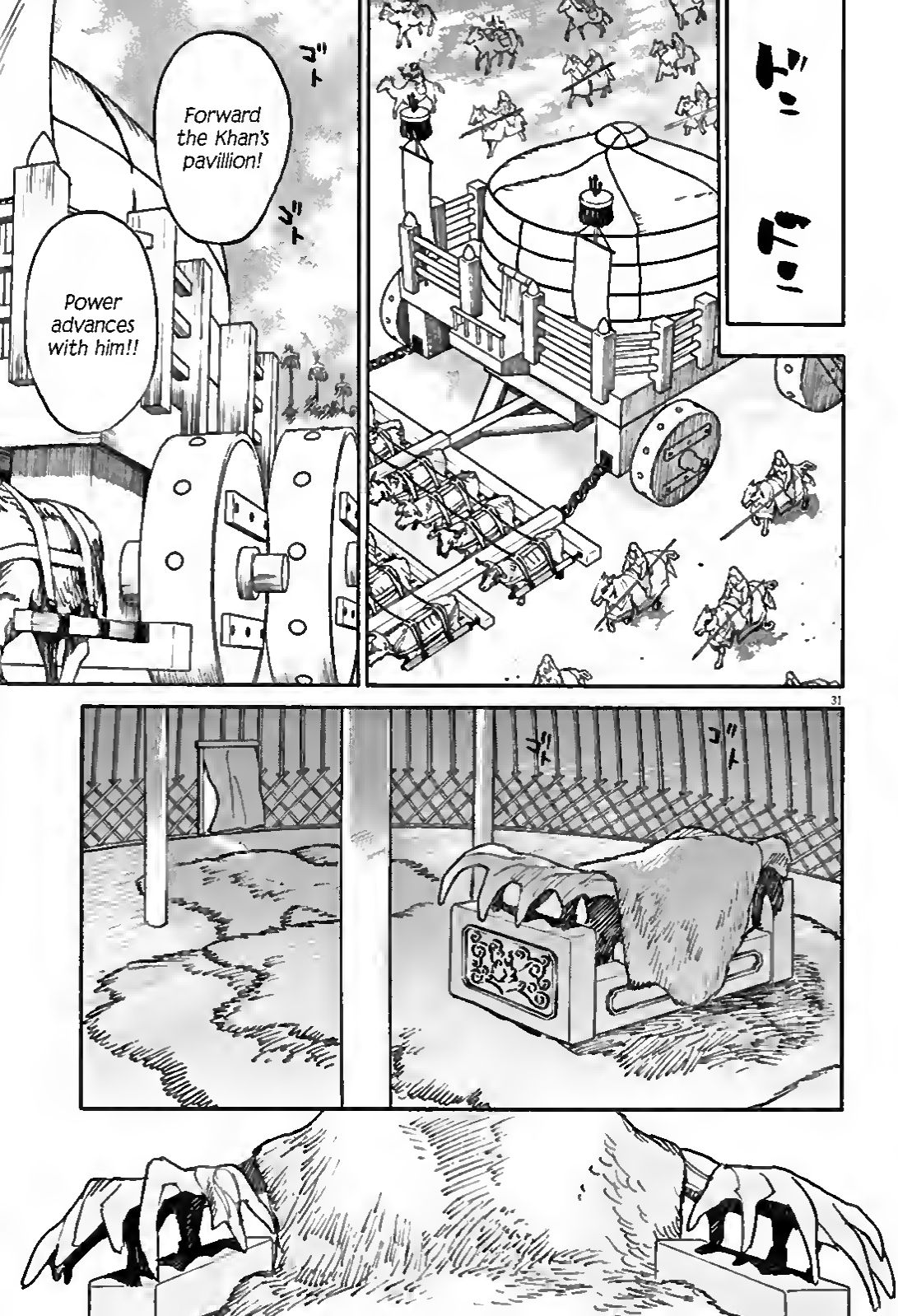

I'll take the Great Khan's head before that happens.

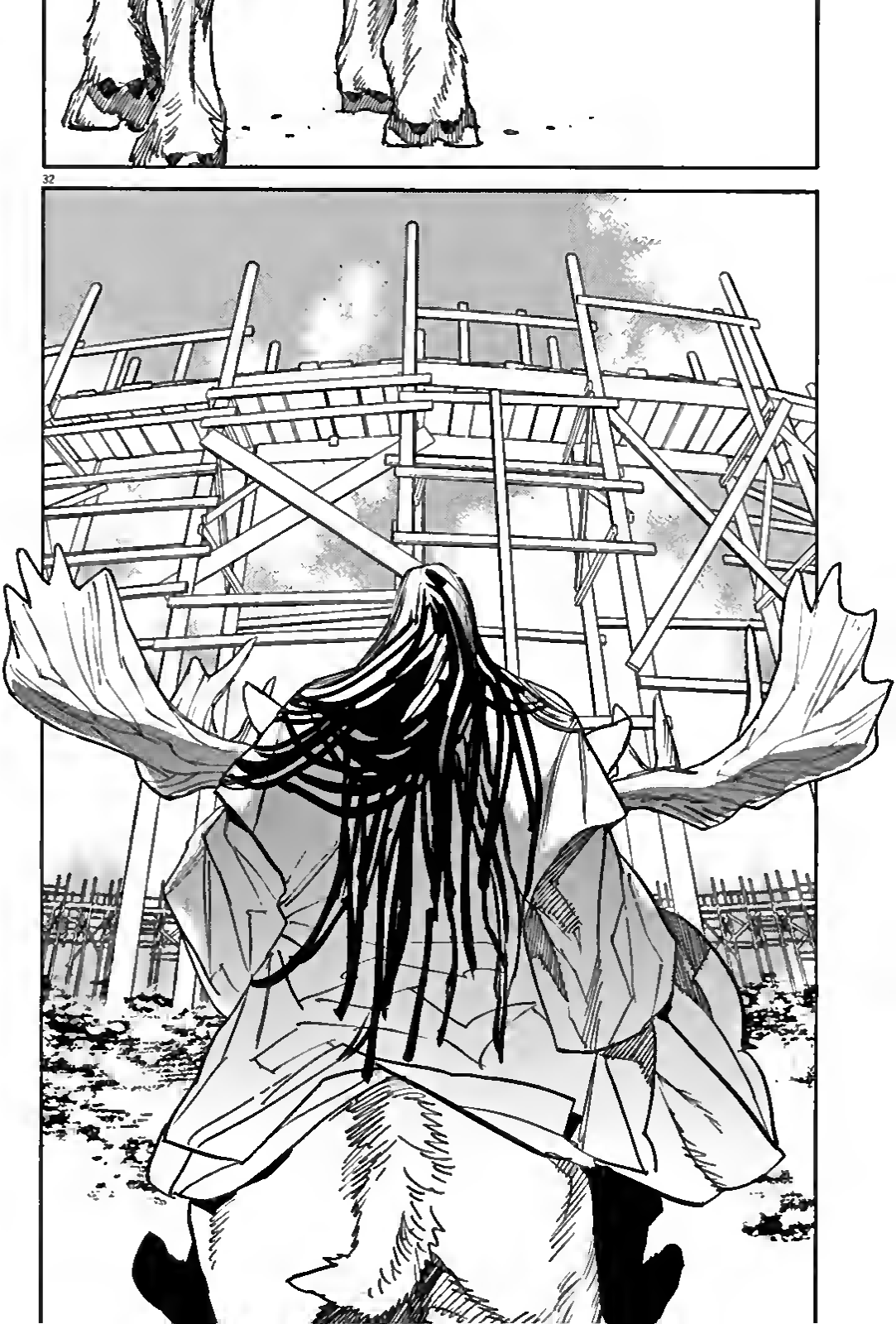
28


Whether it's the Tiger Man or me, one of us will see this through.

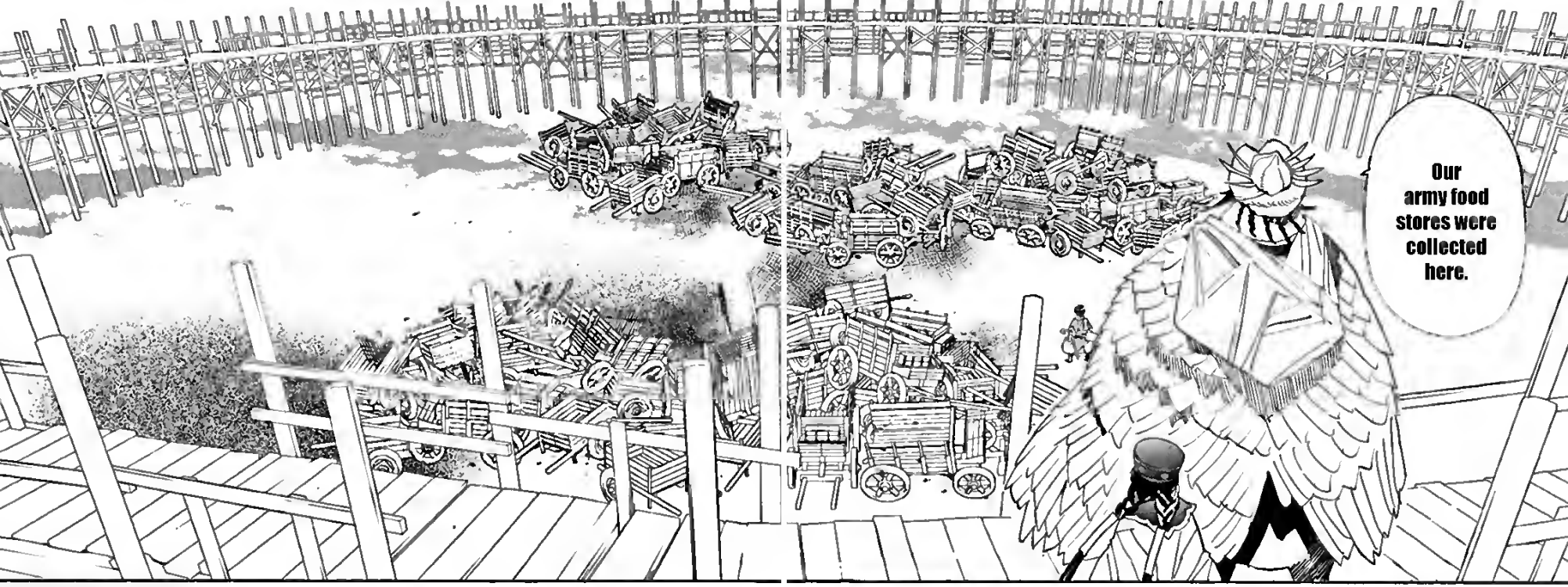
Don't act the old man and slack off.
So I'm trusting the other half of the Voice of Jade
and Yurul's safety to you, Boldu.
She cannot hope to come back safely.
Shut. Hell...
She does not intend to return...
!

...it's that dog-call song.


ゴゴゴゴ
Forward the Khan's pavillion!
ゴゴゴゴ
Power advances with him!!
ゴゴゴゴ
ゴゴゴゴ



[Chapter LXVII] Confron~ tation


Our army food stores were collected here.

3
I thought it would be just the place for a leisurely talk.
To say things you've been dying to say, and things that can't be over-heard.

2
I can still smell the burning...
They were put to the torch, and all the food that survived was carried off.
And they wouldn't station guards around a scorched clearing.

He came.
He's really alone...
That's right, father.
crumple

While you have an audience with father, the Voice of Jade will be safe with me.
You can trust me.

Screa

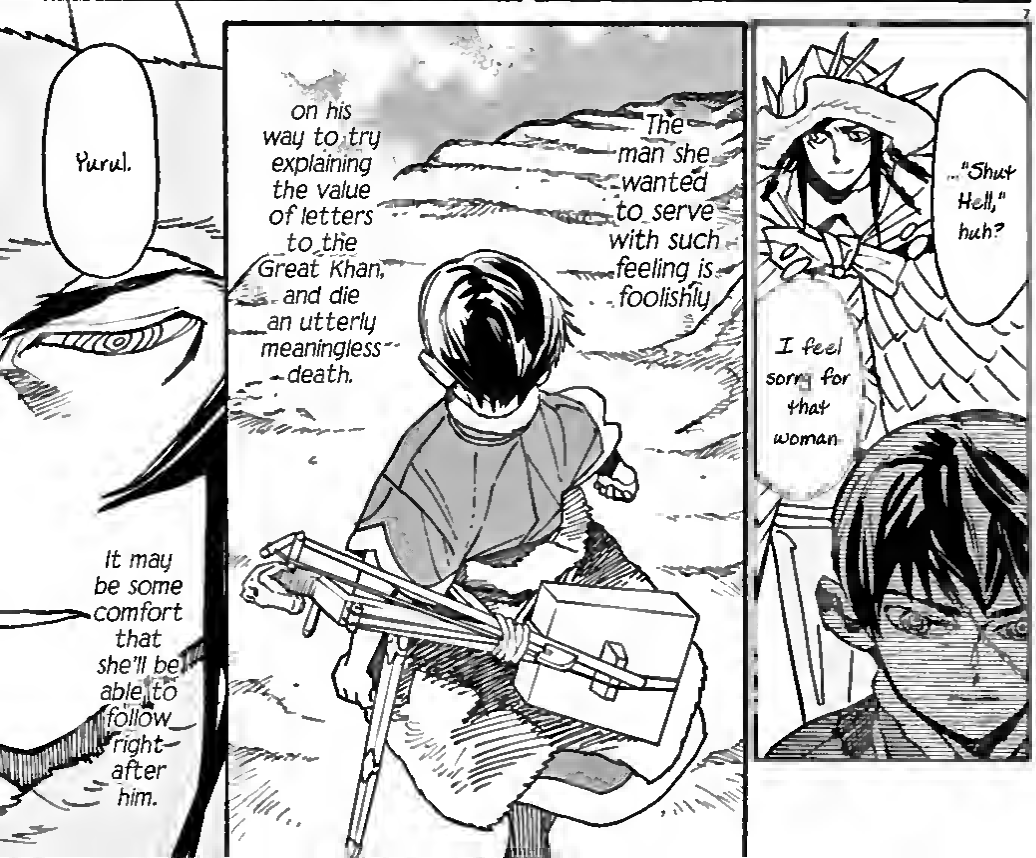
Well then, I'll look after you

You say you'll talk, then you punch and kick.
Ha ha. Looks like someone holds a grudge.
But

...Nalan,
I doubt you're someone I should trust

But
I at least half believe what you said
about the new Mongols, about Mongols that won't make war.
And the other half?
6
Of the Voice of Jade, I mean.
It's already left here.
So, you entrusted it to your friends and sent it south to Song.
I thought so.

There are only so many roads from here to Song. I've made my preparations.
And it probably won't be "Shut Hell" carrying the Voice of Jade. Stealing it will be simple.
After all, "Shut Hell" has been informed of Yurul's meeting with the Great Khan...
so she'll be coming after father's life.

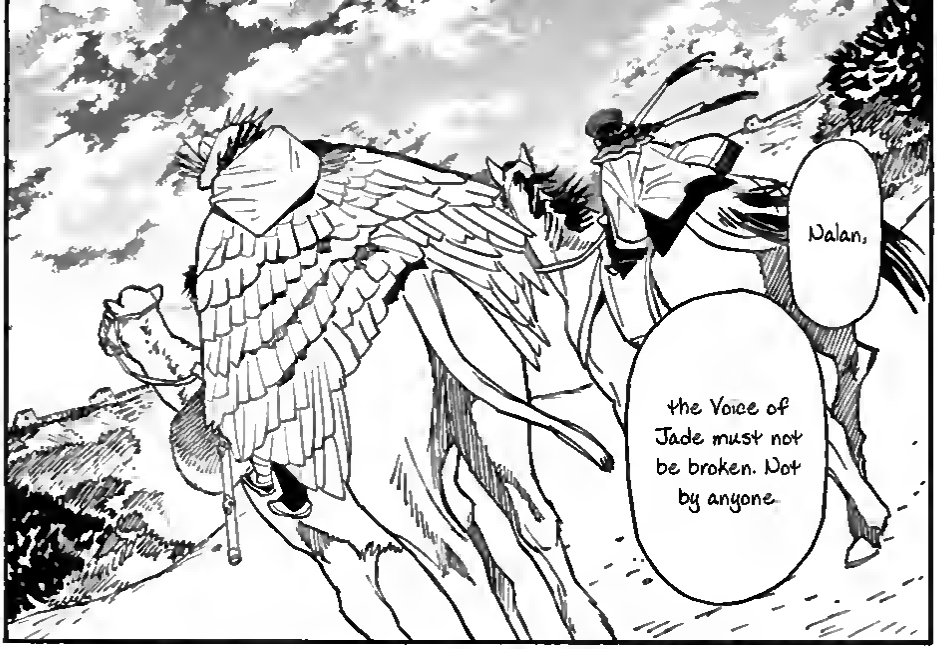

...."Shut Hell," huh?
I feel sorry for that woman.
The man she wanted to serve with such feeling is foolishly on his way to try explaining the value of letters to the Great Khan, and die an utterly meaningless death.
Yurul.
It may be some comfort that she'll be able to follow right after him.

The chances of father forgiving you aren't good
Under normal circumstances, it would be inconceivable to bear arms in the Great Khan's presence,
but hold on to that sword.
Draw it if you have to.
Although I doubt it will do you much good.
In order to protect the person "Shut Hell" loved.
..A woman would probably say you should have kept fleeing together
Even if it meant feeling the weight of a thousand or ten thousand dead innocents on your back.

The me who did that wouldn't be the me Shut Hell believed in.

The Great Khan and I will merely talk.
And in any case, I will return to her.
...Fool.

He told me not to notch or break it...
and that it's a sword of Western Xia.
If the Khan is alone without an escort, I can at least protect myself
It's not mine. It was entrusted to me...
That's a good sword.
It must be old


Dalan,
the Voice of Jade must not be broken. Not by anyone.

That means you ought to protect it, whatever happens.
Among the Mongols, it will be protection for you now that you know the secret of the Great Khan's back.

For years, maybe decades
If I don't come to reclaim it, I'll be leaving it in your keeping for a long time.
Yeah.

Your new Mongols will no longer have killed the Tangut script.
Make it the proof of that... for people in the centuries to come.

12

Apparently it will be surprisingly like today.
I don't know who will be there in hundreds of years to check on them.
You're making me promise for future generations, Yurul.
I'll do that

Tomorrows will keep coming one after the other, and there will still be people.
"Yurui,"
"what you're seeing is the real future."
I'm sure you made it back to your land.
It's the land of the future, isn't that right, Sudoh...?

If you find our writing someday, somewhere,
then I have a feeling...
they'll tie our future to you.

The writing of Western Xia.
Because a thing that has threatened the Mongols even once
can never be forgiven.
I'll gather up the Voice of Jade and smash it all.
...Purul.
After I've made father kill you,
and the tiger and "Shut Hell" kill father,

ド!
ド!
ド!
ド!
Father isn't here...

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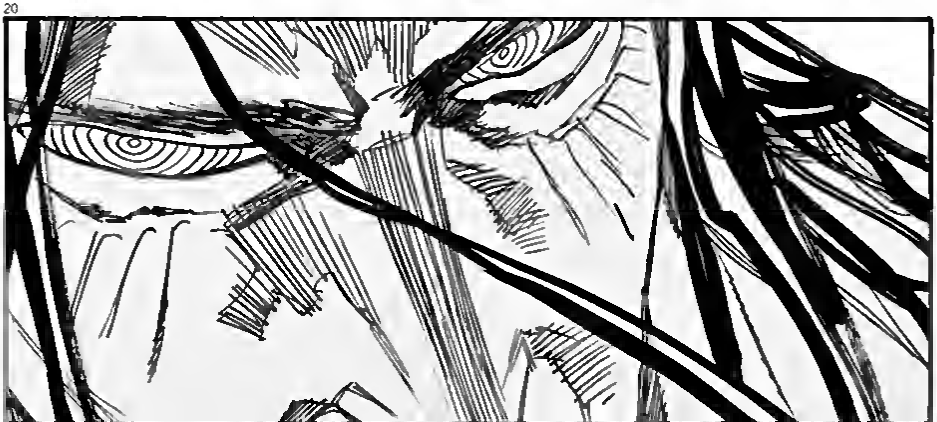
18
Lord Tolui ...?
ﾄﾞﾄﾞﾄﾞﾄﾞ
ﾌﾞﾙﾙﾙ

Welcome to the remains of the fire.
...father.
Nalan.

I thank you for coming alone.



.....!
21
Alone, without soldiers or generals...
At just the thought of defying father – the Great Khan.
I'm nearly trembling.

Just the Great Khan, standing there alone.
Melumi.

The "dog song."

...I've brought my younger brother back.
Yurui,
go to him.
Go to the one you wanted to meet.

He kills and burns people, villages, countries,
as he strives to gobble up the world...
the wolf king.
...Unbelievable.

Can he really be this terrify-ing?

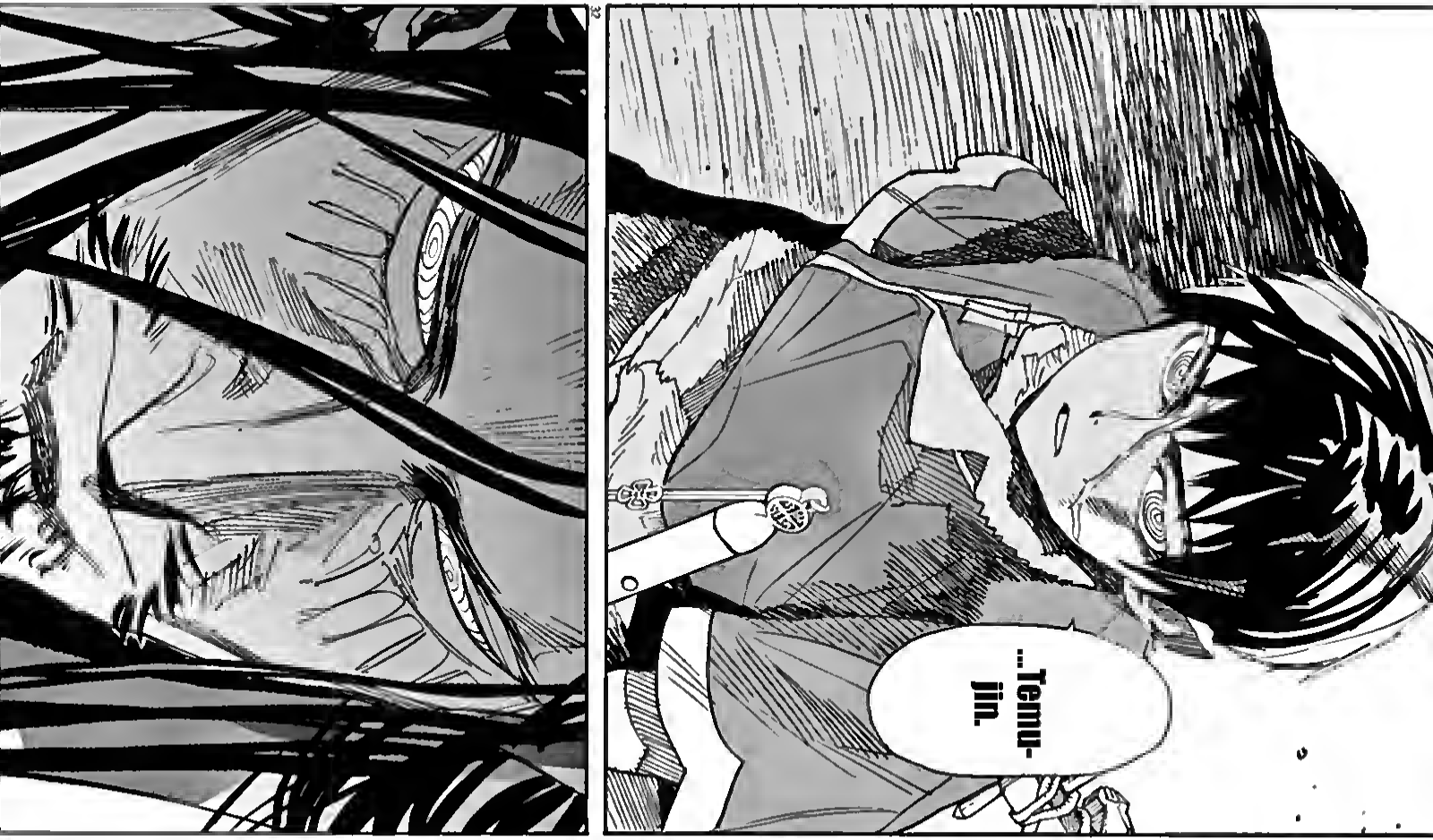
Whatever I say, I'm going to die here.
What can I say and come back alive?
I'm afraid.
28
...What did I think I could say to him?
"Yurui."

"Wherever you find yourself,
speak your plain words..."

...Huh ...?
.....

Was that... your name...?
O little me,
to think that we would meet once more.
"Little me"...? ...Do I remind the Great Khan of himself as a child?

To be continued in [Shut Hell] Volume 11...



【手伝ってくれた人々】
井口文枝
大川亜由美
椿 克彦
前嶋重機
松山由希
渡邉忠司

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毛利英介(関西大学CSAC研究員)

【装 幀】
孝橋淳二

※2
※1
※3
※4
※5
THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR SUCKING WITH US THROUGH TEN COLLECTIONS!
I'm looking forward to seeing you again!!

シュトヘル10

ビッグ スピリッツ コミックス スペシャル

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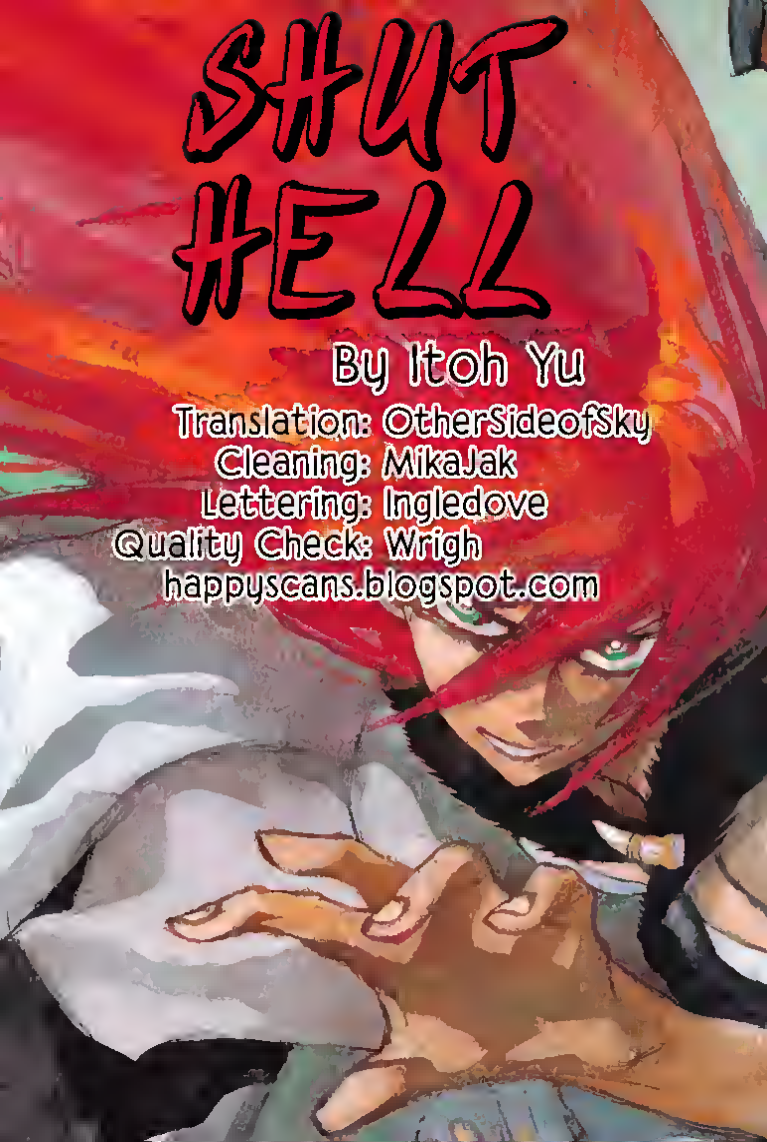
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